

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNANCE AND
KNOWLEDGE-FIT IN DECISION RIGHTS:
HOW DISTRICTS RECRUIT AND HIRE
SCHOOL LIBRARIANS.

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This study examines the organizational structures and decision-making processes used by school districts to recruit and hire school librarians. For students to acquire the information and technology literacy education they need, school libraries must be staffed with qualified individuals who can fulfill the librarian's role as leader, teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator. Principals are typically given decision rights for hiring staff, including school librarians. Research shows that principals have limited knowledge of the skills and abilities of the school librarian or the specific needs and functions of the library program. Research also indicates that those with specific knowledge of school library

programs, namely school district library supervisors, are only consulted on recruiting and hiring about half the time. School districts entrust library supervisors with responsibilities such as professional development of school librarians only after they are hired.

This study uses a theoretical lens from research on IT governance, which focuses on the use of knowledge-fit in applying decision rights in an organization. This framework is appropriate because of its incorporation of a specialist with a specific knowledge set in determining the placement of input and decision rights in the decision-making processes. The method used in this research was a multiple-case study design using five school districts as cases, varying by the involvement of the supervisors and other individuals in the hiring process. The data collected from each school district were interviews about the district's recruiting and hiring practices with principals, an individual in HR, library supervisors, and recently hired school librarians. Data analysis was conducted through iterative coding from themes in the research questions, with continuous adjustments as new themes developed.

Results from the study indicate that governance framework is applicable to evaluating the decision-making processes used in recruiting and hiring school librarians. However, a district's use of governance did not consistently use knowledge-fit in the determination of input and decision rights. In the hiring process, governance was more likely to be based on placing decision rights at a certain level of the district hierarchy rather than the location of specific knowledge, most often resulting in site-based governance for decision rights at the school-building level. The governance of the recruiting process was most affected by the shortage or surplus of

candidates available to the district to fill positions. Districts struggling with a shortage of candidates typically placed governance for the decision-making process on recruiting at the district level, giving the library supervisor more opportunity for input and collaboration with human resources.

In districts that use site-based governance and that place all input and decision rights at the building level, some principals use their autonomy to eliminate the school library position in the allotment phase or hire librarians that, while certified through testing, do not have the same level of expertise as those who achieve certification through LIS programs. The principals in districts who use site-based governance for decision rights but call on the library supervisor for advisement stated how valuable they found the supervisor's expertise in evaluating candidates for hire. In no district was a principal or school required to involve the library supervisor in the hiring of school librarians.

With a better understanding of the tasks involved, the effect of district governance on decision-making, and the use of knowledge to assign input and decision rights, it is possible to look at how all of these factors affect the outcome in the quality of the hire. A next step is to look at the hiring process that school librarians went through and connect those with the measurable outcomes of hiring: school librarian success, retention, and attrition; the quality of school library program services, outreach, and involvement in a school; and the perceptions of the success of the school librarian and the library program as seen from students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other community stakeholders.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Personnel responsibilities [of school district library supervisors] include selection, supervision, and evaluation of library staff, and collaboration with principals in the selection and evaluation of building level library personnel. Closely related activities are the development of job descriptions, the recruitment of school library personnel, and provision for their professional development.

—Position Statement from the American Association of School Librarians' Supervisor's Section (AASL, 2012, p. 2)

School librarians and the programs they run are an integral part of schools and are essential for the growth of students as 21st century learners. For students to acquire the information and technology literacy education they need, school libraries must be staffed with qualified individuals who not only meet the certification requirements of the school district in which they work, but are knowledgeable about the specific needs of their student population, have an understanding of the numerous roles that the school librarian must play, and work seamlessly with the many groups and individuals within their school's community.

Schools and students are successful when districts hire quality school librarians. To accomplish this, they need appropriate recruiting and hiring practices. In the organizational structure of school districts, principals are typically given decision rights for recruiting and hiring staff for their schools, including school librarians. Research shows that principals have limited knowledge of the skills and abilities of the school librarian or the specific needs and functions of the library program (Hartzell, 2002; Lau, 2002; Marcoux, 2005; Shannon, 2009), with their knowledge of school libraries coming mostly from previous experiences with librarians as a principal or former teacher (Church, 2008; Hartzell, 2002). The work of school librarians is different from that of classroom teachers; therefore specific knowledge about school library programs is required to hire school librarians effectively. Research indicates that those with specific knowledge about the needs and requirements of school library programs and school librarians, namely school district library supervisors, often are not consulted about these recruiting and hiring decisions (Weeks et al., n.d.).

Research in information technology (IT) governance in business organizations indicates enterprises that give decision rights to those who have the appropriate knowledge produce superior outcomes to those organizations which have less effective governance (Clark, 2005; Henry & Kirsch, 2003; Tiwana, 2009; Weill & Ross, 2004). This higher organizational performance depends, in part, on a good fit between the distribution of knowledge among the people and the arrangement of

decision rights. This is particularly important for recruiting and hiring decisions because of the impact those decisions have on the organization.

In this chapter, I will detail the purpose of the study and the operational definitions and assumptions for this work. I will then argue the need for the study. I then present the research questions, followed by the theoretical lens used to frame the study.

1.1 Statement of Purpose

This study on recruiting and hiring is a step toward a broader understanding of how to organize and manage effective hiring of school librarians to fully realize the potential for school library programs in supporting student achievement. This study investigates the organizational structure and decision-making processes of school districts that affect the recruiting and hiring of school librarians. The purpose is to identify the structures and processes through which the individuals involved do or do not share information and how those individuals collectively or individually make decisions about recruiting and hiring. The individuals most involved in such decisions are building-level principals, district-level human resource departments, and school district library supervisors (hereafter, will be most commonly referred to as “supervisors” or “library supervisors”) (Shannon, 2008). While library supervisors are more likely to have the appropriate knowledge to make decisions regarding school library programs and staff, principals typically hold the rights to make those decisions for their school building (Harris, Rutledge, Ingle, & Thompson, 2010).

1.2 Operational Definitions

- *School district library supervisor*: the individual in charge of library services at the district level. This individual may also have other responsibilities at the building level (e.g., they may also be a building-level librarian and work as a supervisor as an extra duty) or at the district level (e.g., they may also be in charge of social studies, technology, or textbooks).
- *Principal*: the administrator at the building level tasked with running an individual school.
- *Human resources department (HR)*: the office serving all levels of the school district, including carrying out operational requirements of such tasks as recruiting and hiring. This office is also mandated with carrying out the policies and protocols of the governing board regarding the many aspects of personnel and human capital (Tsui, 1987).
- *Building-level school librarian*: an individual in charge of a building-level school library program. Their roles include leader, teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator (AASL, 2007).
- *Certified librarian*: an individual who has met the educational qualifications of the state. Individuals typically gain their certification by either attending a state accredited certification program (usually at the graduate level) or obtaining a library endorsement through testing. States differ in their requirements for certification, thus what constitutes a certified librarian may differ from state to state.

- *Governance*: the structure used by an organization for determining organizational objectives and monitoring performance to ensure that objectives are attained (Ad Hoc Task Force on Corporate Governance, 1999). Within the context of this study, this refers to the structure of the school district and how hierarchies, policies, protocols, and procedures affect communication and collaboration among different parts of the organization.
- *Input*: the right and/or responsibility given to an individual or group by an organization or superior to share knowledge with and provide information to the individuals making a decision in an organization. Sometimes referred to as input rights or input responsibility.
- *Decision rights*: the act of a superior or organization entrusting decision-making authority to an individual or group within that same organization, allowing them to make the decision without the consequence of reversal (Dessein, 2002).
- *Knowledge-fit*: the assignment of decision rights by an organization based on the fact that certain individuals have the knowledge valued to make that particular decision within the organization (Jensen & Meckling, 1992).
- *Knowledge sharing*: the act of making one's knowledge available to others in an organization. The act is purposeful and must be done voluntarily (unlike reporting done out of obligation), and provided in a way that can be understood and used by others (Ipe, 2003). Knowledge sharing should not be confused with *knowledge transfer* (the movement of knowledge from one

location or individual to another in an organization) or *shared knowledge* (knowledge that is not exchanged between two or groups, but a state in which both groups possess the same knowledge).

- *Recruiting process*: the process by which school districts attempt to increase the number of applicants to their school district.
- *Hiring process*: the process by which an individual is hired for a position at the building level in a school district. This includes the application process, selection of potential candidates, interviewing of potential candidates, and the selection of the final individual for hire.

1.3 Assumptions

In this study, I operate under the assumption that a school district library supervisor has sufficient knowledge of the district's school library program and the work of the school librarian to sufficiently manage and advise on the program. While this assumption may not be universally true, research from the 2012 Lilead Survey indicates that the majority of library supervisors were formerly school librarians with multiple years of service in the school library prior to becoming the district supervisor (Weeks et al., n.d.). Results from the Lilead Survey also indicate that some individuals supervise libraries as a part of other responsibilities and may not have had previous experience with school libraries. However, I assume that even in these instances, the inexperienced library supervisor is still the most likely individual to

have knowledge at the district level about what is happening in school libraries and the needs of the building- and district-level programs.

1.4 Need for the Study

School library programs are vital to students acquiring skills in reading, information, and technology literacies; learning the ethical use of information; receiving equitable access to books, technology, and information; gaining a social context for learning; and becoming lifelong learners (AASL, 2007). School library programs must be appropriately staffed with certified professionals prepared to be leaders, teachers, instructional partners, information specialists, and program administrators (AASL, 2009).

With such an important and unique role in the school, it is necessary that individuals who conduct the recruiting and hiring of school librarians either be knowledgeable about the librarian's work and the contributions of the school library program to student learning, or use the expertise of someone with the necessary knowledge to assist in evaluating candidates throughout the recruiting and hiring processes. In the hiring of librarians, it is not enough to be aware of what it takes to be an excellent teacher or knowledgeable about the needs of the school; an understanding of the many roles of the school librarian is also required.

It is standard in a school for the principal to make the final decision on hiring individuals for that school, with earlier decisions in the recruiting and hiring processes sometimes occurring at the district level (Wise et al., 1987). However,

principals and others in the school district often have outdated or inaccurate information about the roles and responsibilities of the school librarian (Church, 2008; Everhart, 2006; Hartzell, 2002; Naylor & Jenkins, 1988; Shannon, 2009). The district library supervisor has knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of school librarians and the goals and objectives of school library programs. They can help ensure that the best and most qualified school librarians are recruited and hired. However, baseline research indicates that as many as 40 percent of library supervisors have no involvement in the hiring of school librarians (Weeks et al., n.d.). If the supervisor is not involved in the decision-making processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians, what assurance is there that principals or HR have the proper knowledge to effectively complete those processes?

There is limited research about the recruiting and hiring processes for school librarians. With such a pivotal role in the preparation of lifelong learners for an unknown technological future, it is necessary to better understand the recruiting and hiring processes of school librarians, particularly the roles of those with the most knowledge about the benefits of the school library program. A greater understanding about the governance of recruiting and hiring decision rights and the use of knowledge-fit in making those decisions may help ensure that students have the librarians they need in their schools.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the need for understanding more about the recruiting and hiring process of school librarians and how the knowledge of school district library supervisors is incorporated into knowledge-fit for decision rights in a school district, this study examines the following research questions:

1. How do school districts make decisions about recruiting and hiring school librarians?
 - a. How does the organizational structure of the school district influence the decision-making processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians?
 - b. How do school district policies and procedures influence the decision-making processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians?
 - c. How do the actual processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians adhere to or differ from school district policies or procedures?
2. How do the specific knowledge sets held by different district-level departments influence the decision-making of principals regarding recruiting and hiring school librarians at the building level?
 - a. How are school district library supervisors involved in making building-level recruiting and hiring decisions?
 - b. How are human resource departments involved in making building-level recruiting and hiring decisions?
 - c. In what ways, if any, do principals, supervisors, and human resource departments coordinate on decisions on recruiting and hiring school librarians?

1.6 Theoretical Lens: Governance and Knowledge-Fit in Decision Rights

Hiring school librarians is different from hiring a classroom teacher. School librarians hold a specific knowledge set and work in a different environment than a classroom teacher. Rather than managing a classroom, school librarians manage an entire program for the school, while at the same time teaching information,

technology, and literacy skills in conjunction with other parts of the curriculum. To better understand how the organizational structure and unique knowledge of individuals can affect the decision-making process, I looked outside the educational field for a theoretical lens through which to view the processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians. Research in IT governance pointed to a theoretical framework that included all of these factors about governance, knowledge-fit, and decision rights.

Each group and individual in an organization has a specific knowledge set that can contribute to the organization as a whole. Governance of an organization is most effective when decisions are made by those with the appropriate knowledge to make those decisions (Clark, 2005; Henry & Kirsch, 2003; Tiwana, 2009; Weill & Ross, 2004). When decision rights are assigned to those without the necessary knowledge, or actions are taken without proper advisement—aspects of ineffective governance—less effective decisions may be made. According to research, those with the knowledge background to make the decision should be consulted or should have the rights to make that decision. This makes for the best knowledge-fit for decision rights. However, this is a largely theoretical solution. There are numerous instances in which policies, personalities, organizational structures, and bureaucratic red tape can keep decision rights from those with the knowledge, or those with the knowledge-fit, from having an influence over decisions.

A great deal of research has been done on IT governance and the knowledge-fit for decision rights. Such research provides an option for organizations to make

effective use of their IT products both for their work within the organization and for tools used by and sold to clients. This theoretical perspective may be applied to the decision-making process of recruiting and hiring school librarians. In many school districts, the governance structure gives principals decision rights, though they may not have the necessary knowledge to make those decisions. A principal has these rights because of his/her specific knowledge of the school and the needs of the students. However, because the needs of the library program are specific and different from those of the regular classroom, the principal cannot necessarily be expected to successfully recruit and hire school librarians alone. Including the knowledge of the library supervisor may make for more effective decisions and a better governance structure.

1.7 Summary of the Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the organizational structures and decision-making processes that best enable school districts to make decisions regarding recruiting and hiring school librarians. To ensure that qualified individuals are being placed and retained as librarians in schools, there must be an understanding of how decisions are made regarding recruiting and hiring school librarians within a school district. With limited research in the area of school librarianship being applicable to study these questions, this study uses a theoretical lens from research on IT governance using knowledge-fit in decision rights. The next chapter reviews the literature from which the research questions for this study were developed.

Chapter 2: Background

Although there is limited research on the practice of recruiting and hiring school librarians, this chapter will provide the background and an overview of the literature upon which this study builds. First, I present research on the importance of the role of the school librarian. Then, I present prior research on recruiting and hiring of school librarians. Next, to better understand how they might be a part of the decision-making process on the recruiting and hiring of school librarians, I discuss the previous research on school district library supervisors, their roles and responsibilities, impact, and specific knowledge set. Finally, I present the theoretical lens through which the study is viewed: how governance and the use of knowledge-fit affects decision rights and the decision-making process in an organization and how this lens can be used to observe decision-making in school districts.

2.1 The Importance of the School Librarian

The study of school librarians' work is essential because of the skills they teach in reading, information, and technology literacies, which are so vital to students in today's global information economy. Numerous studies provide correlational evidence that school library programs and school librarians are associated with higher

levels of student academic achievement. In particular, these studies show that having a full-time, certified librarian in a school, specifically teaching information literacy, is highly correlated with student achievement on standardized tests. The most notable of these research studies are commonly referred to as the “state studies.” Lance, Welborn, and Hamilton-Pennell (1990) first conducted one of these studies in Colorado, investigating the correlation between different aspects of school library programs and students’ achievement on standardized test scores in their state. Their research pointed to a positive correlation between academic achievement and school library programs with a full-time librarian, adequate budgets for resources, and an appropriate number of books per student in the school library’s collection. The study took into consideration the socioeconomic status of the students, the demographics of the school, and the academic achievement levels of their parents. This study has been repeated in other states with studies finding that school library programs staffed with a full-time school librarian have students that achieve higher average standardized test scores (Achterman, 2008; Baughman, 2000; Baxter & Smalley, 2004; Klinger, Lee, Stephenson, Deluca, & Luu, 2009; Lance, Hamilton-Pennell, & Rodney, 2000; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001; Lance, Rodney, & Russell, 2007; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2000b; Lance, Rodney, & Schwarz, 2010; Quantitative Resources, 2003; Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002, 2003; *School Libraries & Student Achievement in Ontario*, 2006; Small, Shanahan, & Stasak, 2011; Smith, 2006; Todd, Gordon, & Lu, 2010; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2005; Todd, 2005).

The literature also shows that, along with having a certified librarian in the school library, actively teaching information literacy in the school library program has a positive correlation with academic achievement on standardized tests (Achterman, 2008; Baughman, 2000; Farmer, 2006; Klinger et al., 2009; Lance, Hamilton-Pennell, et al., 2000; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2010; Lance, Rodney, et al., 2000b; Lance et al., 2001; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002; Lance et al., 2007, 1990; Lance, Rodney, & Schwarz, 2010; Rodney et al., 2002, 2003; *School Libraries & Student Achievement in Ontario*, 2006; Smith & EGS Research & Consulting, 2001; Smith, 2006; Todd et al., 2010; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2005; Todd, 2005). Hiring individuals who are unprepared to effectively teach information literacy would put students at a distinct disadvantage, making proper hiring of school librarians an important undertaking.

Additionally, information literacy cannot be taught in a vacuum. School librarians must collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure that students learn information literacy skills in context throughout the curriculum. In schools where teachers and school librarians are given time to collaborate, and such collaboration is a priority, students perform better on standardized tests (Achterman, 2008; Brodie, 2006; Chambers, 2001; Farmer, 2006, 2009; Lance et al., 2001; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2010, 2000a; Lance, Rodney, et al., 2000b; Marcoux, 2007; Morin, 2008; Rodney et al., 2002, 2003; Smith & EGS Research & Consulting, 2001; Todd, 2008; Yukawa & Harada, 2009). More than just the opportunity for collaboration, teachers and school librarians need support from their administration. The efforts of

school librarians and teachers to collaborate on projects are more effective when they have the support of their principal (Church, 2008; Farmer, 2006, 2007; Morris & Packard, 2007).

2.2 Recruiting Building-Level School Librarians

The research on both the recruiting and hiring of school librarians is extremely limited. I was only able to find one study that focused on recruiting school librarians into positions in schools. Shannon's (2008) work looked specifically at the recruiting of school librarians into school districts in South Carolina. In studying principals, supervisors, and human resource directors, she found that little recruitment was actually being done. Human resources and supervisors relied mostly on the placement services of the public university, and did so at twice the rate of principals, who were mostly unaware of the resource. Few individuals at any level placed advertisements for positions of any kind. Most individuals, principals in particular, relied on applications sent by prospective employees to populate their applicant pool. In Shannon's study, only two supervisors reported recruiting efforts that involved using tuition reimbursement for current teachers to become school librarians. No other school library employers reported any sort of long-term plan to deal with recruitment.

Other literature on recruiting school librarians focuses on recruiting individuals to become future school librarians through universities that teach library and information science (LIS) at the graduate level (Bishop & Janczak, 2007; Everhart, 2002; Whelan, 2003), rather than recruiting individuals for specific library

positions. This type of recruiting may be the result of school districts being forced to use provisional and emergency certification of teachers. When the applicant pool is not large enough, schools sometimes recruit teachers to run the library, under the agreement that they will obtain school library certification on a part-time schedule while working (Everhart, 2000). Many cohorts at LIS schools are formed in this manner, with school districts and universities working together to bring teachers into the school library field. The advantage of creating such a cohort over other types of recruiting is the experience that teachers already have in education before seeking their certification in school librarianship. The disadvantage is placing an individual with possibly no previous experience into the school library while they are earning their certification. Regardless, with so little literature on how recruitment is being done, there is little knowledge of how such recruiting decisions are being made and who is organizing these cohorts.

2.3 Hiring Building-Level School Librarians

The literature around the hiring practices of school districts regarding school librarians is limited, as is the literature on recruiting. Most recently in the Lilead Survey (Weeks et al., n.d.), supervisors were asked, “What is your level of responsibility in the hiring of building-level librarians?” Only 12 percent said they were “responsible” for hiring building-level librarians. Forty-seven percent indicated that they play an “advisory role.” The remaining 41 percent said that they were “not responsible” for hiring in any way. These declared levels of responsibility and

involvement in hiring differ in comparison with the supervisors' responses on other topics, such as professional development. Ninety-three percent of respondents indicated that they are responsible for the professional development of the school librarians in their district, with seven percent indicating that they play an advisory role. Not a single respondent indicated that they play no role at all. Based on such statistics, it appears school districts entrust the development and expertise of their school librarians to the supervisors once they are hired. However, only slightly more than half of library supervisors are consulted in some manner when those same individuals are hired into their schools. The disparity between supervisors' work in hiring and professional development is in great part why this research is being conducted and will be discussed in more detail in the next section on the library supervisor.

In his research on the perceptions of supervisors and their work as seen by others, Held (1986) asked supervisors, their immediate superiors, library educators, and state school library administrators, about their thoughts on the role that supervisors play in hiring school librarians. The supervisors believed that they should have more responsibility in this task. The supervisors' immediate superiors felt differently. Superiors thought the library supervisors should have less responsibility in hiring and preferred that they be removed from the process. Held was unable to identify the cause of the superior's disfavor for library supervisors' involvement in recruiting and hiring, but speculated that it might be related to the organizational structure of the school district and called for future research.

When Shannon (2009) asked principals about what they look for when hiring school librarians, she found that their focus had shifted somewhat from the traditional role of program administration to that of teaching and learning. Shannon noted that this move from program administration to teaching is also reflected in the standards for school library programs. However, there was still very little said about the school librarian as both a leader and collaborator in working and planning lessons with teachers. Shannon also found that principals looked for some skills not listed in school library standards, like *Information Power* (AASL, 1998), such as interpersonal and communication skills, among other affective factors. However, she found that principals said little about the specific knowledge or professional skills librarians should possess when interviewing for positions at their schools.

With so little known about recruiting and hiring school librarians, there are significant questions to ask about the decision-making processes in districts. The literature shows that the knowledge required often is not held by the principals who have decisions rights about recruiting and hiring. What knowledge, then, is held by district library supervisors, and how they can contribute to the decisions being made about school librarians?

2.4 The School District Library Supervisor

Because principals generally hold the decision rights on the recruiting and hiring of school librarians, and they often have outdated or insufficient knowledge about school librarians and school library programs (Alexander, Smith, & Carey,

2003; Dorrell & Lawson, 1995; Kaplan, 2006; Kolencik, 2001; Lau, 2002; Marcoux, 2005), this study seeks to understand how the knowledge of the school district library supervisor can best be brought into the decision-making process. This section will provide information on the role of supervisors and how they can contribute knowledge to the decision-making process.

Since the early 1900s, organizations have created and revised school library standards to communicate contributions the school library can make to a school's learning program (Ersted, 1953; Henne, 1968; Marcoux, 2008; Michie & Holton, 2005; S. Nelson, 1987). In these standards, school library leaders have long held that a school district library supervisor is integral to the district and building-level library program's success (AASL, 1960, 1994, 1998, 2012; ALA & AECT, 1975, 1988; Coulter, 1990). This section first focuses on the national standards description of the role of district library supervisors. Second, I discuss research completed on supervisors at the national level. To better understand how complicated the role of the supervisor within the school district is and how important that role could be, I discuss the previous research on perceptions of the supervisor's roles, responsibilities, and impact on building-level programs.

2.4.1 The Role of Supervisor as Described in National Standards

Standards for School Library Programs, released in 1960, devoted an entire chapter to the school library media supervisor at the district level. These standards typify the kinds of statements that appear consistently in standards from that time

through the end of the 20th century. According to the 1960s document, a school library supervisor for a city, county, or multi-district school system “works with administrators, teaching staff, and other supervisors to provide better educational experiences for children and young people” (AASL, 1960, p. 42). Documents supporting the standards asserted the value of the supervisor as one who “interpret[s] the role of the library to everyone...so that people are made aware of the importance of the library in all places in the school program” (Saunders, 1968, p. 149).

The 1975 national guidelines published by the American Library Association (ALA) and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT), *Media Programs: District and School*, even more clearly defined the importance of district-level support in creating and maintaining effective library media programs. “The organizational structure places the director of the district program in a key role in decision-making related to setting overall goals, analyzing curriculum, selecting instructional modes, and establishing and maintaining responsible evaluative processes” (ALA & AECT, 1975, p. 11). In the 1988 national guidelines, *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs*, the district-level office was described as “offer[ing] special support to school library media specialists in such areas as advocacy, technical services, cooperative programming, opportunities for resource sharing and leadership on a wide range of issues” (ALA & AECT, 1988, pp. 124-125).

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) explicitly described the role and value of the district supervisor in a position statement updated in 2012. In

this statement, AASL declared that the “responsibilities of a supervisor encompass many areas but can be classified as those of leader, administrator, communicator, and teacher” (AASL, 2012, p.1). Most important to this study, however, are the details about what the supervisors does as an administrator.

The school library supervisor formulates, oversees, and administers a progressive school library program based on a collaboratively developed action plan directed by the district’s mission statement, goals, and objectives supporting increased student achievement while interfacing with academic and technology integration. ...Personnel responsibilities include selection, supervision, and evaluation of library staff, and collaboration with principals in the selection and evaluation of building level library personnel. Closely related activities are the development of job descriptions, the recruitment of school library personnel, and provision for their professional development. (AASL, 2012, p. 2)

This recent position statement argued that supervisors should play a prominent role in both the recruiting and hiring of school librarians. However, it did so without citing research; it simply advocated for the position.

The possible contributions of the library supervisor and the school library program may become more relevant with the passing of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA). Title 2, Part A of ESSA allows school districts to use federal funding to support “the instructional services provided by effective school library programs” (ESSA, 2015). There are additional authorizations for literacy programs and student enrichment, both of which funding for the school library program is authorized. However, nowhere in ESSA is the participation or funding of the school library program required; it is allowed and authorized. It will be up to the individual

schools and districts, and the advocacy efforts of library supervisors and school librarians, to have library programs included.

It is unclear what the reach of these standards and policy statements is beyond the school library field. Such statements will have little-to-no impact if those in school and district administrative positions do not know about them or do not incorporate them into the work of the school district. How can others in education know when to call on the library supervisor for his/her expertise if they are unaware of what the library supervisor can do?

2.4.2 Prior Research Studies on Supervisors

Despite the significant roles and responsibilities outlined in the national guidelines and policy documents, little is actually known about the influence and impact of the presence or absence of district-level leadership on building-level programs. As a result, the claims from AASL that they are important are not compelling. In 2012, researchers at the University of Maryland conducted the Lilead Survey, a three-year study involving both a survey and an online community, which looked at supervisors at the national level. They found that the majority of supervisors in large school districts held little responsibility when it came to hiring or evaluating school librarians (Weeks et al., n.d.).

Until The Lilead Project team began its work, the last comprehensive study of district-level supervisors was conducted by Bundy, Wasserman, and O'Connell in 1967-68, and published in 1970. This landmark study, funded by the U.S. Department

of Health, Education, and Welfare, explored the characteristics and perceived roles of the school library supervisor as part of a larger study on library directors and organizational change. The survey reported that the majority of 99 supervisors from the largest districts throughout the country believed they lacked the leverage necessary to influence activities and developments system-wide. Indeed, they described their role as largely advisory, with a mission “to coerce, to encourage, and to indirectly provoke activity in individual libraries,” revealing a less than optimistic outlook on what they could accomplish (Bundy, Wasserman, & O’Connell, 1970, p. 73). Thus, while AASL asserted that supervisors are important, to date the theoretical arguments and empirical evidence supporting these claims is significantly underdeveloped.

2.4.3 Roles and Responsibilities of the School District Library Supervisor

Beyond these national studies, most of the research on district library supervisors has focused on smaller populations and is largely concerned with either what supervisors and others perceive their role in the district to be or how effective supervisors are in making a positive impact on building-level programs.

Between 1970 and 1990, three studies assessed the role of the supervisor from the supervisor’s own perspective. In Ahlers’s study (1974), supervisors agreed that their most essential roles included program management and supervision; professional leadership; curriculum and in-service instruction; media provision; and programmatic research, design, and evaluation. However, a similar study in Texas by

McCulley (1989) revealed significant differences in perceived and actual involvement among supervisors. The supervisors reported completing different activities from one another on a day-to-day basis. Additionally, they did not agree on what they should be doing as their tasks. After the 1988 *Information Power* guidelines were released, Coulter found that “the greatest area of participation on the part of the responding district library media supervisors [was] in the area of consultation followed closely [by the area of] leadership,” while the least involvement was in the coordination area (Coulter, 1990, p. 29). None of these studies specifically mentioned any role that the supervisor might play in recruiting and hiring school librarians.

Studies have examined the views of different stakeholders and how they regarded the roles and responsibilities of the district-level supervisor. Principals, supervisors, teachers, and building-level school librarians often see both the perceived and actual roles differently (S. Nelson, 1987). Other administrators at the district level have perceived supervisors as being more involved in organizational management and instruction than did the supervisors themselves (Held, 1986). Krentz (1986) found that principals, school librarians, and supervisors in Wisconsin all perceived the role of the supervisor in relatively the same way, only to later find out that this was due to an extensive information campaign by the State’s department of education on behalf of the supervisors.

Similar to the findings by Bundy, Wasserman, and O’Connell in 1970, other studies have identified supervisors as having little confidence in their power to influence programs at the building or district level. In a survey of supervisors only,

Andwood (1984) found that the supervisors held high ideals for their positions but low expectations of what they could actually accomplish. Nelson (1987) reported that supervisors rated their influence on program development higher than did their respective superintendents. However, the supervisors in Nelson's study also concluded that they had little influence in the area of supervision.

These studies indicate that unless there is a concerted effort to provide information on the role of the supervisor in the district (which there rarely is), there is significant variation in supervisors' and other stakeholders' expectations about what the library supervisor does. Making clear arguments and providing evidence of the role of supervisors—in this case regarding their part in the process of recruiting and hiring decisions—is worth accomplishing.

2.4.4 Effectiveness of the School District Library Supervisor

Despite concerns about school library supervisors' influence, studies that have examined their effectiveness frequently show that the position has a positive impact on the school district. Eberhard's findings indicate:

The presence of the District School Media Director does appear to affect positively the library media program and services as reflected by the overall involvement of [districts with supervisors the following] six services: Educational Program Development, Administration and Supervisory, Instruction, Acquisition, and Evaluation, Special Services, Preparation and Production of materials (1974, p. 178).

Coleman (1982) found that the supervisor not only had a positive effect, but that a supervisor with prior teaching experience, a master's degree, or professional

organization membership had a positive effect on perceptions of service compared to supervisors without these qualifications. More recently, in a study in North Carolina, Cogdell (2004) found that there were significant differences in school library media expenditures, collection size, software, computers, and resources between middle schools with district supervisors and those without them.

Zsiray (1986) concluded that the supervisor's support did not contribute to higher levels of professional performance by building-level school librarians, nor did it have an effect on the school librarians' professional activities. However, Zsiray recommended further study that specifically analyzed the role of the supervisor. Dandridge (1988) learned that although the supervisors provided some services, such as individual guidance in reading instruction, the relationship between supervisors' administrative practices and the frequency of services was not statistically significant.

Based upon the research reviewed, it is clear that there is not an extensive amount known about the roles and responsibilities of the supervisor. Although the profession has promulgated the value and importance of the supervisor over many years through many statements of standards and guidelines, there is little empirical data about the scope of the responsibilities assumed by these individuals and the effect they have at the building and district levels.

2.5 Governance and Knowledge-Fit in Decision Rights

With little published on the recruiting and hiring of schools librarians and no broader theory or framework regarding the human resource management of school

librarians, it was necessary to find a theoretical framework outside of the literature on school librarianship. Though I looked at the literature on recruiting and hiring classroom teachers, I was unable to find a model about human resources in education that factored in the need for a specialized area of expertise. For these reasons, I sought a theoretical lens that looked at decision-making processes outside of school librarianship and K-12 education. In attempting to identify how school districts make decisions about recruiting and hiring school librarians, knowledge-fit and decision rights in the governance of the school district seemed the most appropriate lens. Through this lens, I examine how the knowledge sets of different groups and individuals are used to make decisions about school librarians and how governance in the district distributes those decision rights.

In information technology (IT) governance, researchers have conducted numerous studies on knowledge-fit and decision rights. These studies examined how decisions regarding IT projects in organizations should be made and who should be making those decisions. Specifically, knowledge-fit refers to the assignment of decision rights by an organization based on certain individuals having the knowledge necessary to make a particular decision within the organization (Jensen & Meckling, 1992). Decision rights are defined as a superior or organization entrusting decision-making authority to an individual or group within that same organization, allowing the individual or group to make a decision without the consequence of reversal (Dessein, 2002).

There are both business and technical decisions to be made around development projects in IT. Throughout this literature review of IT governance, the two main groups discussed are business managers and IT specialists. Business managers are tasked with providing a service to the customer or company that will be of sufficient use and productivity for a given purpose. They hold the decision rights to most of the business aspects of a shared project. IT specialists are tasked with actually creating the product or tool that will be used by the customer or the company. As such, IT specialists hold the decision rights to most of the technical aspects of a shared project. Understanding where the knowledge is in an organization allows that organization to create the correct governance structure to assign decision rights to the appropriate group or individual. This same model for viewing knowledge-fit and decision rights can be used in observing the recruiting and hiring of school librarians. A comparison of the knowledge and decision rights of business managers and IT specialists versus principals, HR departments, and school district library supervisors is provided in Figure 2.1.

This section proceeds with a discussion of IT governance using knowledge-fit, and describes how organizations benefit when decision rights are aligned with knowledge. Throughout each section, parallels will be drawn between the lens of governance, knowledge-fit, and decisions rights in IT and how it might similarly be applied to the process of recruiting and hiring school librarians.

Figure 2.1: Comparison of Individual and Group Knowledge and Decision Rights between IT Governance and School District Governance

Administrators

Position	Knowledge	Decision Rights
Business Managers	Broad knowledge about the business objectives and client needs.	Business decisions about a shared project and final decisions on project completion.
Principals	Broad knowledge about the school building objectives and student needs.	Final decision on the recruiting and hiring of building personnel.

Specialists

IT Specialists	Specific knowledge about software development and IT needs and capabilities.	IT decisions about a shared project.
HR Departments	Specific knowledge on the policies and procedures of recruiting, hiring, and other facets of human resources.	Currently unknown regarding school librarians. Possibly contributions regarding following procedures or possible liaisons.
School District Library Supervisors	Specific knowledge about the school library program and school librarians' needs, objectives, and abilities.	Currently unknown regarding school librarians. Possible input on the recruiting and hiring of building personnel.

2.5.1 IT Governance

There is much research on knowledge-fit and decision rights centered on IT governance and software development. This section specifically details some of the research on IT governance and how this research can be used as a lens for looking at the governance around decisions of recruiting and hiring in school districts. Weill and Ross (2004) define IT governance as “specifying the decision rights and accountability framework to encourage desirable behavior in using IT” (p. 8). They also provide an example as to how this would work in a corporation:

... governance determines who holds the decision rights for how much the enterprise invests in IT. Management determines the actual amount of money invested in a given year and the areas in which the money is invested. The senior management team designs IT decision rights and accountabilities to encourage the enterprise’s desirable behaviors. If desirable behavior involves independent and entrepreneurial business units, IT investment decisions will be primarily with the business unit heads. In contrast, if desirable behavior involves an enterprisewide view of the customer with a single point of customer contact, a more centralized IT investment governance model works better. More centralized models for HR (and other key assets) would assist in achieving a single point of customer contact. Problems occur when there is a mismatch between desirable behavior and governance (pp. 8-9).

Decision rights and the models used (centralization versus decentralization) are based on the desired needs of the institution and the preferred outcomes.

Weill and Ross (2004) state that effective IT governance is the most important factor in determining how much an organization can gain from their investment in IT projects. The central questions around IT governance are:

1. What decisions must be made to ensure effective management and use of IT?

2. Who should make these decisions?
3. How will these decisions be made and monitored? (p. 10)

In comparing IT governance to decision-making in the recruiting and hiring of school librarians, I have made the following observations:

1. *What decisions must be made to ensure effective recruiting and hiring of school librarians?* The decisions that must be made are who and where to recruit individuals for open positions and who to hire for those positions.
2. *Who should make these decisions?* Typically in school districts, the principal is the individual who makes the final decision about who gets hired in their school, possibly working with a group of teachers in their school and coordinating with their HR department.
3. *How will these decisions be made and monitored?* The first part of this question is directly addressed in the research questions of this study. How are recruiting and hiring decisions about school librarians made? The monitoring of these decisions does not fall under the purview of this research study, but should be studied in the future.

Weill and Ross (2004) further break down this third question, asserting that the governance of an organization divides the decision-making process into two parts: who has input on a decision (decision-making contributors) and who has decision rights (those who actually make the decision). This aspect of decision-making is integral to the research questions of this study. While it may be understood that

principals almost universally have the decision rights, who else has input into those decisions and how much input do they have?

2.5.1.1 Governance Archetypes

Based on their research of over 250 organizations, Weill and Ross (2004) identify a number of IT governance archetypes and describe how each type makes decisions about IT. These archetypes may be helpful in understanding how school districts make decisions about human resources management. Each type of governance style affects how decisions are made within the organization. A process or the creation of a product may require multiple decisions, and each of those processes and decisions may be governed by a different archetype. If different districts have different archetypes of governance in making decisions, having terminology already in place to compare them will be helpful. In Figure 2.2, the archetypes are detailed according to the placement of input and decision rights.

The type of governance system in each enterprise can vary, based on the type of IT decision being made. For example, in the technical issue of making decisions on IT architecture, 70 percent of the enterprises studied by Weill and Ross use an IT monarchy governance structure where IT holds the decision rights. “The dominant decision-making role of IT in architecture decisions suggests that business managers feel unqualified, uninterested, or unneeded—they are confident that IT professionals can translate IT principles into an architecture.” In this instance, the leaders in IT are

given input and decision rights for technical decisions, with the enterprise determining that they have the most knowledge to make those decisions.

Figure 2.2: Governance Archetypes (Weill & Ross, 2004)

Style	Who has decision or input rights?
Business Monarchy	A group of business executives or individual executives (CxOs). Includes committees of senior business executives (may include CIO). Excludes IT executives acting independently.
IT Monarchy	Individuals or groups of IT executives
Feudal	Business unit leaders, key process owners or their delegates
Federal	C-level executives and business groups (e.g., business units or processes); may also include IT executives as additional participants. Equivalent of the central and state governments working together.
IT Duopoly	IT executives and one other group (e.g., CxO or business unit or process leaders)
Anarchy	Each individual user

The type of governance system in each enterprise can vary, based on the type of IT decision being made. For example, in the technical issue of making decisions on IT architecture, 70 percent of the enterprises studied by Weill and Ross use an IT monarchy governance structure where IT holds the decision rights. “The dominant decision-making role of IT in architecture decisions suggests that business managers feel unqualified, uninterested, or unneeded—they are confident that IT professionals can translate IT principles into an architecture.” In this instance, the leaders in IT are given input and decision rights for technical decisions, with the enterprise determining that they have the most knowledge to make those decisions.

In another example, the federal and IT duopoly archetypes are modeled more often in decisions on business application needs in IT:

Business needs for IT applications often has two conflicting objectives—creativity and discipline. Creativity involves identifying business applications that support strategic business objectives and facilitate business experiments. Discipline is about architectural integrity—ensuring that applications leverage and build out the enterprise architecture rather than undermine architectural principles (Weill & Ross, 2004, p. 40).

Whereas the decisions regarding IT architecture are more technical and rest with the IT executives, decisions about business applications still require a great deal of input from IT, but also need the knowledge of executives and business unit leaders. Both the federal and IT duopoly archetypes allow for the knowledge outside of the IT department to be included.

As businesses use different archetypes for governance in different IT decisions, the same may be true for school districts in making decisions about recruiting and hiring school librarians. If the political archetypes can be applied to the governance processes around decisions in school districts, the separation of decisions may be necessary. While part of the same process, the decisions around recruiting and hiring are different and may result in different governance structures surrounding those decisions.

2.5.1.2 Other Factors in IT Governance

Along with the governance archetypes, there are other factors to consider, including centralization and decentralization. Business organizations that are highly centralized are also likely to have highly centralized IT governance. Similarly,

organizations with a decentralized structure tend to decentralize their IT governance (Sambamurthy & Zmud, 1999). However, the centralization of authority “is only optimal if top management has the information which is important to the main decision, or is able to check and verify the information provided by lower levels the hierarchy” (Dessein, 2002, p. 832). Similarly, school districts have different ways of organizing; some districts provide great autonomy to building-level administrators, while others make very centralized decisions (Liu & Johnson, 2006).

If school districts and human resources management prove comparable to business organizations and their IT governance, the level of centralization, or district-level decision-making, within the district structure could prove to be important. Figure 2.3 compares the concept of centralization in both corporate and school district governance regarding IT and recruiting and hiring decisions. It is possible that district-level decisions about recruiting and hiring school librarians may only be effective when the individuals making the decisions have sufficient knowledge to do so. However, the same is also true of a decentralized system, where administrators must possess the appropriate knowledge to handle site-based decision-making in human resources management on their own.

In some instances, governance is dictated through the use of power by the decision-maker. It is specified in the governance of most school districts—the principal is the one that has decision rights regarding the individuals who will work in his or her school (Harris et al., 2010). In comparison with IT governance, this would

Figure 2.3: Comparison of Corporate and School District Governance and Decision-Making Regarding Centralization and Decentralization

	Corporate Governance	School District Governance
Centralized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization has centralized governance structure. • Organization is more likely to have centralized IT governance. • Business managers must have more understanding of IT technical knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District makes most decisions at the district-level. • District may make more district-based decisions about recruiting and hiring school librarians. • District specialists must have more understanding of specific building needs and requirements.
Decentralized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization has decentralized governance structure. • Organization is more likely to have decentralized IT governance. • IT specialists must have more understanding of business project knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District allows most decisions to be made at the building-level. • District may allow principals to have complete control over the recruiting and hiring of school librarians. • Building administrators must have more understanding of district policies and school library program needs and requirements.

make principals the business manager. Hann and Weber (1996), found that when the business manager (or “superior”) was more uncertain of the task at hand, they were actually less likely to delegate decision rights to others, which ran counter to Hann and Weber’s predictions. Business managers were also more likely to exert control when the project was in line with the manager’s goals and objectives. The instances

in which IT managers were given more control were when they had a longer tenure at the organization and when the project manager exerted less control over the planning process specifically (Hann & Weber, 1996). In school districts, this could indicate that principals exert more control over the hiring and recruiting process when they are uncertain of the task. However, if there is a supervisor or HR liaison for school librarians in long standing with the district, they may be the de facto person to whom principals defer for recruiting and hiring decisions. In either case, it is uncertain when principals in school districts will seek assistance from supervisors or delegate the responsibilities of recruiting and hiring to others in the school district.

Another concern of IT governance is that not all decision rights are extended to a single individual or group. Some IT decisions must be made cooperatively, using the knowledge of both the business manager and the IT specialist. The same may be true in recruiting and hiring school librarians. The decision to hire a particular individual will likely require the knowledge of more than one group or individual to factor into a decision. In Henderson and Lee's research (1992), they posit that both business managerial control and IT specialist control can coexist in IT governance.

Managerial control appears more effective when [results are] behavior oriented while team-member control is more effective when [results are] outcome oriented. This suggests that effective teams have a manager with the skills and capabilities to influence how work is accomplished while the pressure to meet deadlines and commitments arises from one's peers (1992, p. 773).

This could be reflected in the governance structure of school districts as building and district-level personnel work together to make decisions. While the principal may be

considered the managerial control, those in HR and the supervisor are the ones, potentially, with outcome-oriented goals, making them the most effective individuals to have control in this aspect of governance.

There are many factors in the governance of an organization. Some are determined by constructs such as the structural archetype with which an organization aligns or how centralization affects decision-making processes. What changes in an organization, though, when the specific knowledge sets of its different groups and individuals are taken into consideration? What improvements can be made when those who have a certain understanding of a particular decision are given the right to make that choice on behalf of the organization?

2.5.2 Knowledge-Fit and Decision Rights

Rarely is an individual in an organization capable of having the knowledge to make all decisions. It is therefore necessary that decisions and input on decisions be divided amongst those individuals and groups with the necessary knowledge to make the best choices. Jensen and Meckling (1992) provide further explanation:

The limited capacity of the human mind and the costs of producing and transferring knowledge mean that knowledge relevant to all decisions can never be located in a single individual or body of experts. Thus, if knowledge valuable to a particular decision is to be used in making that decision, there must be a system for assigning decision rights to individuals who have the knowledge and abilities or who can acquire or produce them at low cost (p. 271).

In IT governance, different groups must often work together, each with specialized knowledge sets. Ideally, decision rights originate at the very top of an organization

and may then be distributed in the way that results in the best possible outcomes for the enterprise:

The bundle of decision rights owned in the name of such an organization is vested nominally in its board of directors and CEO, and the rights are then partitioned out among decision agents in the organization. Those organizations that accomplish this partitioning in a fashion that maximizes their value will tend to win out in the competition for survival (Jensen & Meckling, 1992, p. 272).

There are project managers and business groups with the business and user application knowledge about a given project. Then there are the technical managers and IT teams with the technical knowledge. Hence, there must be a governance structure in existence to get decisions rights to those with the appropriate knowledge.

Within software development, there are two types of knowledge that are relevant to the process. There is the technical knowledge, which encompasses all of the specifics of design, programming, and product development. Then there is the business knowledge, which entails all the rules, processes, policies, and understanding of the needed use of the system (Tiwana, 2009). Both of these types of knowledge are necessary and complementary to the process of finding the best software development project solution. Without one or the other, the project is likely to have inadequate results (Faraj & Sproull, 2000).

This construct of knowledge-fit within software development projects is comparable with the process of recruiting and hiring school librarians in a school district. The principal has the knowledge of the school: how it is run, what the overall needs of the students are, and other specific, building-level needs; this is comparable

to that of the business manager in IT governance. The HR department has all the knowledge of hiring practices within the district and how to adhere to the specific policies of the district; this is analogous to the IT specialist and their technical knowledge. In the case of recruiting and hiring school librarians, however, the knowledge of the needs of, and expectations for, the library program rest with the school district library supervisor. The library supervisor could possibly represent a third entity in the governance structure, or rather another specific knowledge set that make be linked to the specific knowledge that resides in the HR department.

2.5.3 Knowledge Sharing

One factor in knowledge-fit and decision rights is the sharing of knowledge between groups working together (Henderson & Lee, 1992; K. M. Nelson & Coopride, 1996; Pee, Kankanhalli, & Kim, 2010; Tiwana, 2009). This factor is of importance to this study because the final decision rights for hiring personnel are unlikely to be moved from the building level. If the decision rights for hiring school librarians are to remain where there is not the best knowledge-fit, then some form of dialogue and knowledge sharing must occur between principals at the building level and the library supervisor and HR department at the district level.

In IT governance, knowledge sharing between individuals or groups allows the party with decision rights to gain some knowledge of the others' work to make better decisions. "Assigning project decision rights to one department over the other enhances neither systems development efficiency nor effectiveness unless the

associated department also has the pertinent complementary knowledge in the other department's domain" (Tiwana, 2009, p. 194). When business managers and IT specialists work together, the best decisions are made when each group has some knowledge of the other's process and work. Business managers should have some understanding of the technical aspects of a project, and IT specialists should have an understanding of the business results of a project. The same situation exists with recruiting and hiring school librarians, since principals, HR departments, and district library supervisors all need to have some idea of the concerns, needs, and policies and procedures of other areas to make correct decisions in recruiting and hiring.

There are many factors that play into the usefulness of knowledge sharing in an organization. Pee, Kankanhalli, & Kim (2010) effectively outline those factors in their work on knowledge sharing in information systems development. Some of the factors most relevant to the governance in school districts for the recruiting and hiring of school librarians include:

- The expertise, capability, and professional experience of the person sharing knowledge (the sender) (Faraj & Sproull, 2000)
- The absorptive capacity of the person with whom knowledge is shared (the receiver) (Ko, Kirsch, & King, 2005; Tiwana & Mclean, 2005)
- The intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of both parties to send and receive knowledge (Ko et al., 2005)
- The relationship (Ko et al., 2005), influence, and trust between the sender and receiver (K. M. Nelson & Coopridge, 1996)

It is uncertain how or if any of these factors may play a role in the governance of recruiting and hiring school librarians; however, there are many instances in which knowledge sharing could occur in school districts, such as a library supervisor instructing a principal on how to judge a candidate's responses to interview questions.

2.6 Summary of the Literature Review

The recruiting and hiring processes used by districts for school librarians are largely unexplained. Current literature does not reveal the mechanics of who is involved beyond the general understanding that principals, though they may be lacking in the specific knowledge of library programs, are largely given final decision rights on all building personnel. And while school district library supervisors have the specific knowledge of library programs, many are not involved in the hiring process at all.

Decision-making processes in other areas, such as IT governance, have undergone more intensive research. These processes provide ways of looking at how outcomes can be affected by setting up governance that enables those with a particular knowledge-fit to hold decision rights. This research from IT governance can be used to study the decision-making processes in the recruiting and hiring of school librarians and to help identify the district organizational structure used to determine the location of decision rights and how different individuals and groups in the district work with one another throughout these processes.

Chapter 3: Methods

In this chapter, I present the use of an exploratory, multiple-case study design as the method for this study. Next, I discuss the population of districts used and the grouping and selection of districts for study. Finally, I present the types of data collected and analysis completed.

3.1 Research Questions

Based on the need for more information about the recruiting and hiring processes of school librarians, and how the knowledge of school district library supervisors is incorporated into the governance and knowledge-fit of a school district for decision rights, this study examines the following research questions:

1. How do school districts make decisions about recruiting and hiring school librarians?
 - a. How does the organizational structure of the school district influence the decision-making processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians?
 - b. How do school district policies and procedures influence the decision-making processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians?
 - c. How do the actual processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians adhere to or differ from school district policies or procedures?
2. How do the specific knowledge sets held by different district-level departments influence the decision-making of principals regarding recruiting and hiring school librarians at the building level?

- a. How are school district library supervisors involved in making building-level recruiting and hiring decisions?
- b. How are human resource departments involved in making building-level recruiting and hiring decisions?
- c. In what ways, if any, do principals, supervisors, and human resource departments coordinate on decisions on recruiting and hiring school librarians?

3.2 Research Design

For this study, I chose a multiple case study design. The use of case studies is ideal for this research. The research questions examine “how” a process occurs, it observes contemporary events that the researcher cannot change, and there is need to study the contextual conditions of the phenomena to understand their relevance (Yin, 2009). These case studies allow for an in-depth analysis of the decision-making processes in each school district.

The use of multiple cases allows me to draw comparisons, as findings replicate or contrast across cases (Yin, 2009). To draw comparisons between districts, selection of participating districts was purposeful, with districts differing in the number of tasks performed by the library supervisor in the hiring process, the number of groups or individuals involved in the hiring process, and the geographic location. This process included selecting candidates from previous research conducted by the Lilead Project research team and a screening survey that I conducted specifically for this study. I will discuss the selection of school districts in detail later in this chapter. The purposeful selection of each case allows for the exploration and comparison of variables, which may contribute to differences in governance, the use of knowledge,

and the placement of decision rights in each district regarding the recruiting and hiring process.

This type of case study design is often used to study IT governance. These studies have produced frameworks for institutions to help them make better decisions about their IT needs and uses. Specifically, Weill and Ross (2004) used numerous case studies to develop a framework for making decisions about institutional IT needs. The case studies for this research are based on similar designs, but these are the first to consider the involvement of different individuals and groups in decision-making in school districts regarding recruiting and hiring of school librarians.

The unit of analysis for each case study is the entire school district and all its encompassing parts. I consider the individual participants of each district as parts of the whole. While I compare individuals, such as an HR representative, against their counterparts in other districts, they are considered sub-units of the school district and not their own units of analysis.

3.3 Study Population of School Districts

The districts invited to participate in this study were part of the 2012 Lilead Survey. The Lilead Project (Weeks et al., n.d.) surveyed library supervisors from school districts across the country. The population of respondents included all school districts in the U.S. with more than 25,000 students. In the event that a state did not have at least one school district with more than 25,000 students, the supervisor in the

largest school district in that state was selected to participate. This brought the number of supervisors surveyed to 290.

The survey had 166 complete responses. The school districts of these 166 respondents formed the initial population for this study. From this initial list of 166 school districts, I excluded districts for the following reasons:

- The supervisor indicated that they only served as the supervisor on a part-time basis.
- The supervisor indicated that they also worked at the building level.
- The student population was less than 25,000.

Of the 166 completed responses from the 2012 Lilead Survey, this left 147 school districts remaining in the population for this study.

3.4 Obtaining Research Approval

For this study, I was required to go through the Internal Review Board (IRB) process for the University of Maryland (UMD) and each of the individual school districts. At UMD, I obtained IRB approval before contacting the districts in any way. This included receiving approval for the follow-up survey. With that process complete, I was able to use approval from UMD to obtain approval from each school district.

After completing the screening process with the library supervisor, I contacted the person in charge of conducting research in the district. Each district had certain forms and explanations that I was required to provide. In some districts, the approval

process went through a single individual. In other districts, the process required the convening of a committee or council to review the entire research proposal. More than one district required further explanations before the research was approved. However, no school district required any changes to the study before I could proceed.

3.5 Grouping Districts for Selection

To compare case studies and their processes in decision-making, I determined it was necessary to group school districts and then select one district to study from each group. I did not choose school districts at random, because responses from the Lilead Survey indicated differences among districts regarding the involvement of library supervisors in the hiring process. A random selection of districts posed the risk of none of these differences being present. While repetitive case studies based on random selection could still reveal a pattern on how governance affects the recruiting and hiring school librarians, the purpose of this study is to see how specific differences among school districts concerning governance and knowledge-fit have an effect on the involvement of library supervisors in recruiting and hiring school librarians. However, responses to the Lilead Survey did not provide the information necessary to group districts for selection in this study. In the Lilead Survey, two close-ended questions asked the supervisors about their participation in the hiring process. They appear in Figure 3.1. The survey did not ask supervisors about the extent of their involvement or the involvement of others in the process. Additionally,

there were no questions on the Lilead Survey that asked about the supervisor's involvement in recruiting.

Figure 3.1. Hiring Questions from the 2012 Lilead Survey

15. How important are the following personnel tasks in your position as district library supervisor?

Prompt: Hiring staff at the building level

Responses: Extremely important; Important; Somewhat important; Not important; Not applicable to my position

22. What is your primary role in the following tasks or decisions?

Prompt: Hiring staff at the building level

Responses: Responsible for tasks or decisions; Advisor on tasks or decisions; Not my responsibility.

In considering the research questions, I sought to group school districts based on two sets of criteria. For the first research question on how school districts make decision on recruiting and hiring school librarians, it was important to understand how many individuals were involved in those processes in each district. To address the second research question about the involvement of particular individuals, I wanted to specify the level of involvement of the supervisor. The 2012 Lilead Survey did not collect this information. For this reason, a follow-up survey was necessary.

3.5.1 Follow-up Survey

The follow-up survey provided data to better group school districts for selection for this study. Of the 147 qualifying school districts and their responding

library supervisors from the 2012 Lilead Survey, there was no need to send the follow-up survey to 48 Lilead Survey participants because these respondents indicated they were “not responsible” for any part of the hiring process and that they spent no time on hiring because it was “not applicable” to their position. The remaining supervisors in 99 districts were asked to complete an additional survey to clarify the number of people involved in the recruiting and hiring processes and the number of tasks they completed in these processes. There were 57 complete responses for a response rate of 58 percent.

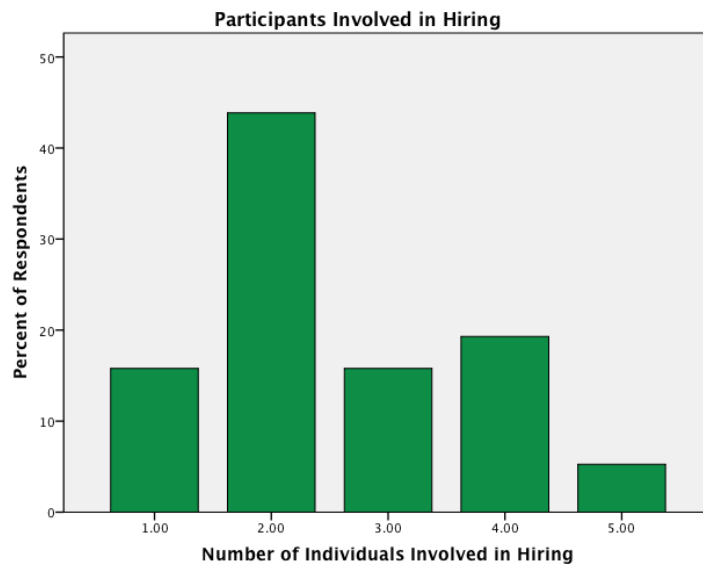
One question in the follow-up survey asked supervisors to name all other individuals or groups involved in the hiring process of librarians (see Figure 3.2). From this question, I tallied the number of people involved in the hiring process in each school district. Every participating supervisor indicated that the school principal was involved. Supervisors’ responses indicated that as many as four other groups or individuals were involved in recruiting and hiring processes. Figure 3.3 shows the number of individuals or groups involved in each school district, as indicated by the library supervisor.

Figure 3.2. Follow-up Survey Question 1

Who else is involved in the process of hiring building-level school librarians?
Check all that apply.

- ☐ Principals
- ☐ Other building-level administrators (please specify)
- ☐ Human Resources, not a specific person
- ☐ Human Resources, a specific liaison for school libraries
- ☐ Other district administrators (please specify)
- ☐ Other departments (please specify)
- ☐ Others (please specify)

Figure 3.3. Number of Individuals Involved in the Hiring Process



Regarding the second research question, which focuses on the number of tasks and the level of involvement of the supervisor in hiring, the survey contained two questions asking about specific tasks supervisors complete during the hiring process. Both questions and responses appear in Figure 3.4. From that list of activities, each supervisor was given a cumulative score of all the activities they participated in. The results of those scores can be seen in Figure 3.5.

3.5.2 Grouping Follow-Up Survey Responses to Select Case Studies

Cross tabulating the questions on the number of individuals or groups involved in hiring and the number of tasks completed by supervisors gave the results in Figure 3.6. When the individual cross-tabs are clustered into groups, a pattern becomes more obvious (Figure 3.7). The number of tasks performed by the supervisors was positively correlated with the number of individuals involved in recruiting and hiring, $c^2(1, N = 57) = 9.906, p = .001647$. This correlation points to a pattern of centralized and decentralized decision-making regarding building-level hires. When the decision rests mostly with the principal in building-level decision-making, the supervisor is less likely to have a high number of hiring responsibilities. When the decision is spread out and more individuals and groups are involved in the process, then supervisors are more likely to have a high number of responsibilities to complete in the hiring process.

Figure 3.4. Follow-up Survey Question 2

There are many tasks that must be completed to successfully hire building-level school librarians. In which of the following preliminary and preparation tasks related to the hiring of building-level school librarians do you participate? Check all that apply.

- Reviewing applications
- Performing screening interviews to create a candidate pool
- Identifying candidates for school-building interviews
- Providing principals with guidelines for evaluation when they conduct interviews
- Providing Human Resources with guidelines for evaluation when they conduct interviews
- None of the above

In which of the following interviewing and evaluative tasks related to the hiring of building-level school librarians do you participate? Check all that apply.

- Conducting interviews with a principal or another building-level administrator
- Conducting interviews with Human Resources
- Serving on interview panels
- Conducting one-on-one interviews
- Evaluating teaching auditions
- Checking references
- Making candidate recommendations to principals
- Making candidate recommendations to Human Resources
- Making final candidate selection decisions
- None of the above

Figure 3.5. Number of Tasks Performed by Supervisors During the Hiring Process

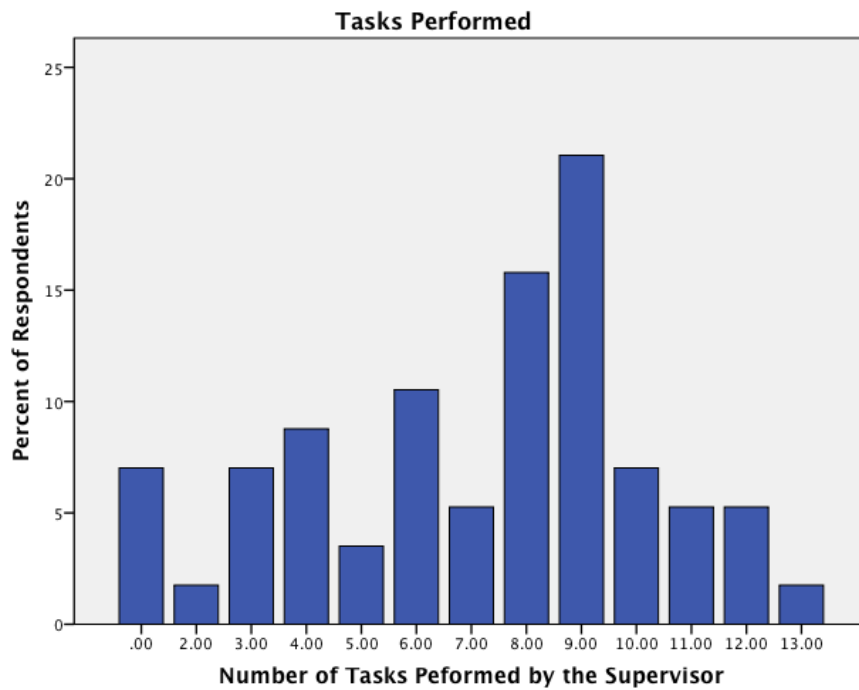


Figure 3.6. Cross-Tabulation of Supervisor Tasks and Individuals or Groups Involved

		Number of Individuals or Groups Involved					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Number of Tasks Performed by Supervisor	0	1	2	0	1	0	4
	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
	3	1	3	0	0	0	4
	4	2	3	0	0	0	5
	5	0	1	0	1	0	2
	6	1	3	2	0	0	6
	7	1	1	0	1	0	3
	8	2	4	2	1	0	9
	9	0	3	2	5	2	12
	10	0	2	1	1	0	4
	11	0	0	2	1	0	3
	12	0	2	0	0	1	3
	13	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Total	9	25	9	11	3	57

Figure 3.7. Large-Clustered Groupings

		Number of Tasks Performed by Supervisor		
		0 – 8	9 – 13	Total
Number of Individuals Involved	1 – 2	26	8	34
	3 – 5	8	15	23
	Total	34	23	57

In selecting case studies, the cross-tabbed responses from supervisors were split into slightly smaller groups. For this purpose, responses were grouped in smaller clusters as seen in Figure 3.8. From this table, the selection of school districts occurred at the extremes of each grouping. The selection of cases at the extremes allows for more comparison among cases, whereas selecting districts closer to the averages might produce more repetition. For example, one district was chosen from the group in which the supervisor completes two to four tasks and one to two people are involved in the hiring process (highlighted in purple in Figure 3.8). One district was also chosen from the group in which the supervisor completes 10 to 13 tasks and 3 to 5 people are involved in the hiring process (highlighted in blue in Figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8. Small-Clustered Groupings

		Number of Tasks Performed by Supervisors					Total
		0 – 1	2 – 4	5 – 7	8 – 9	10 – 13	
Number of Individuals Involved	1 – 2	3	10	7	9	5	34
	3 – 5	1	0	4	12	6	23
	Total	52	10	11	21	11	105

For this study, six case studies were selected. I chose four cases from each of the following groups, based on the results of the follow-up survey:

- Low number of tasks performed by supervisors, low number of individuals involved (highlighted purple in Figure 3.8, 10 districts)
- Low number of tasks performed by supervisors, high number of individuals involved (highlighted green, 5 districts)
- Medium number of tasks performed by supervisors, high number of individuals involved (highlighted orange, 4 districts)
- High number of tasks performed by supervisors, high number of individuals involved (highlighted blue, 6 districts)

Using the group in which the supervisors performed a medium number of tasks instead of a low number of tasks when there was a high number of individuals or groups involved was necessary because there were no potential cases with a low number of tasks completed with a high number of involved individuals. I did not include any of the districts in which the supervisor said they completed zero to one task because of the possibility in which a person may not have completed any tasks.

Additionally, I chose two districts from the 48 districts previously mentioned in which the supervisor indicated in the 2012 Lilead Survey that they were not involved in the hiring process in any way. These cases could possibly help determine why the supervisor is not involved in the hiring process. These two case studies were to be compared with one another and with the other case studies to assess any differences in governance among those districts in which the supervisor is at least somewhat involved in the recruiting and hiring processes and those districts in which they are not involved.

3.5.3 Controlled Variables

Rather than choose districts at random from each of these groups, I attempted to control for three variables in case study selection. The intention of such controls was to ensure that differences in hiring practices were not based on other major differences among the school districts. After grouping, school districts were ranked in each group as being closest to the group mean for the following variables:

- student population
- expenditures per pupil (EPP)
- number of schools in the district

As will be seen in the description of the selection process to follow, I was forced to abandon some of these attempts at control because of unanticipated factors. However, attempts were made to select districts that were similar regarding these variables.

3.6 Selection

After grouping the school districts according to the supervisors' responses to questions about their participation in the recruiting and hiring processes and the number of people involved in those processes, I began the selection process. Selection included ranking the districts in each group by controlled variables and then screening each district as a possible participant.

3.6.1 Screening School Districts

After establishing the four groups for case studies, I conducted a screening process to make sure a district in a chosen group was viable for participation in the

study. A preliminary, but not exhaustive, list of questions for screening is in Figure 3.9. I gathered responses to these questions by making contact with the supervisors in each district. Contact began with an initial email and numerous follow-up contacts if there was no response to the initial email. If response to email was positive, I called the supervisor for a brief discussion that included the screening questions in Figure 3.9. Certain responses eliminated a school district as a viable candidate to participate in the study. For example, if the supervisor was unwilling to participate, the district could not be considered. Another consideration was the IRB process. Individual districts' IRB processes ranged from single-page forms approved by one individual to multi-part document applications approved by a board that meets irregularly. If the IRB process was deemed too involved for a timely completion of the study, I eliminated that district from participation.

Figure 3.9: Pre-Screening Criteria for School Districts

- Is the supervisor willing to participate in the study? What is required to complete the IRB process for the school district?
- Have school librarians been hired in the school district within the last five years?
- Are there a significant number of school librarians in school buildings for the district to be considered comparable to other districts?
- Is the school district involved in any legal action regarding its recruiting and hiring practices?
- Are employees of the school district able to discuss the recruiting and hiring practices of the school district?
- Is the supervisor the one actually involved in the recruiting and hiring decisions, or is it another individual at the district-level library services office?

3.6.2 Selecting from Groups

With each group established, I was able to select the primary candidates for inclusion in the study. Among the districts in each group, I chose school districts based on the geographic location of the school district and the district closest to the group's mean population, expenditures per pupil (EPP), and number of schools.

In each group, there was the possibility that the first choice was not available or applicable for participation in the study. In total, nine districts did not pass the screening process before I arrived at the districts selected for the study. The reasons varied. In one district, the supervisor was unable or unwilling to participate. In two school districts, the school librarians had been laid off and there were no plans to replace them or they were to be replaced with non-certified staff. In more than one district, the supervisor and others in the school district did not respond to email or phone calls.

My original intention was to include two districts as controls in the study to get a better understanding of the possible factors that contribute to the library supervisor not participating at all in the recruiting and hiring processes. After all other selections were completed, I chose two geographic locations not represented by the districts selected from the four groups. For one control, I looked at school districts in the southwestern area of the country. In the other control group, I chose a district from a state in which there was a large number of supervisors, but none participated in the hiring process. In the latter group, no one was available to participate in the study.

3.6.3 Selections

All participants in the study were ensured anonymity in their participation. For this reason, all names and locations use pseudonyms. The locations of each district are identified by their division in the U.S. census (for a map of U.S. census divisions, see the Appendices). After going through the screening process and receiving approval from each individual district to conduct research, the final selections were as follows:

- For the district with a low number of tasks performed by the supervisor and low number of individuals involved in hiring, the participating district was **Cotesworth School District**, located in the South Atlantic U.S. Census Division.
- For the district with a medium number of tasks performed by the supervisor and high number of individuals involved in hiring, the participating district was **Maine North School District**, located in the East South Central U.S. Census Division.
- For the district with a high number of tasks performed by the supervisor and a low number of individuals involved in hiring, the participating district was **Red Rock School District**, located in the South Atlantic U.S. Census Division (in a different state than Cotesworth).
- For the district with a high number of tasks performed by the supervisor and a high number of individuals involved in hiring, the participating district was

Paris School District, located in the West South Central U.S. Census Division.

- For the control district in which there was no involvement of the supervisor and an unknown number of individuals involved in hiring, the participating district was **Sunville School District**, located in the Mountain U.S. Census Division.

3.7 Data Collection

Data collection focused on semi-structured interviews with multiple individuals from each of the school districts. During the interviews, I asked participants about their process for recruiting and hiring school librarians and the role of different individuals and groups in those activities. The individuals interviewed from each school district included:

- the school district's library supervisor,
- a representative from human resources,
- two to three principals at any grade level, who had hired a school librarian within the last five years, and
- three to four school librarians hired in the last five years.

The individuals interviewed for each case study were selected either because they were most likely to be involved in the recruiting and hiring of school librarians (principals and human resources representatives) or they were the individuals with the most knowledge of school librarians (supervisors). As individuals who went through the hiring process, but from the perspective of a candidate and not an employer, I

interviewed school librarians to verify the information given by the other three types of participants.

I chose to use interviews rather than focus groups to gain perspectives from individuals rather than groups. Individual interviews helped avoid groups coming to consensus and premature conclusions about the decision-making process of how they conducted recruiting and hiring (MacDougall & Baum, 1997). Particularly in the case of principals, it was important to gather information about their own personal and specific processes regarding recruiting and hiring without the outside influence of other individuals within the district. Individual interviews also prevented the possibility of agreement and collaboration between departments and individuals where none may actually exist, a problem that could skew the findings. Individual interviews also allowed for an expansion of exploratory questioning throughout data collection. With each successive interview, subsequent interviews were tailored to follow new or adjusted lines of inquiry, based on the responses of others.

I conducted interviews over the phone with each participant. Though conducting interviews in person would have been ideal, it was also cost prohibitive. I used my mobile phone to record each interview with the expressed permission of the participant. In two interviews, there was user error and the interviews were not recorded. For these interviews, I took extensive notes immediately after the interview was completed.

Using the recording, I transcribed each interview, leaving out material that was not pertinent to the study (e.g., conversations about evaluating school librarians

were not transcribed, as they do not fall under the purview of this study). Once transcribed and edited to include only data pertinent to this study, I performed member checks by sending each transcription back to the participant for review. Each participant was given the opportunity to make any changes needed to clarify their response. Once member checks were complete, I loaded transcriptions into NVivo for coding and analysis.

3.7.1 Interviews with School District Library Supervisors

Interviews were conducted first with district library supervisors. Interviews were semi-structured, following a pre-determined protocol (see the Appendices for the complete protocol). The protocol included a list of questions to start the conversation and to ensure that all research questions were addressed, but the semi-structured nature of the interview allowed for participants to bring up other related topics. This process was in keeping with the exploratory nature of the study. In all five cases, the supervisor of library services participated in an interview.

3.7.2 Interviews with Human Resources Representatives

From the interview with the supervisor, I determined which person in the district's human resources department should be interviewed. If the supervisor indicated there was a specific liaison for recruiting and hiring school librarians, that individual was asked to take part in the study. If no specific person was identified, then I made contact with HR without the assistance of the supervisor and preliminary inquiries in the department determined who would be the best candidate for

participation in the study. Similar to the interviews with supervisors, interviews with HR representatives were semi-structured, following a pre-determined protocol (see the Appendices for the complete protocol). Questions shifted in focus to the responsibilities of HR and specific policies regarding recruiting and hiring within the school district. In all five cases, a representative from HR participated in an interview.

3.7.3 Interviews with Principals

Though they were somewhat difficult to identify, I attempted interviews with at least three principals in each school district. Primary selection was based on principals who had made the most recent hires of school librarians in their school district, information I obtained from the district library supervisor. It was preferred that all hires had occurred within the last three years. If finding principals with recent hires was not possible, I attempted to contact principals who had hired a librarian within the last five years. If hiring had been completed more than five years ago, the principal was not eligible to participate.

At the outset of the study, a secondary consideration for principal selection was school grade level. However, getting principals to participate in the study proved difficult, and grade level was removed as a factor for inclusion in the study. Principals were mostly non-responsive to requests to participate; a few principals refused participation. Figure 3.10 shows the number of principal participants in each school district. In each district, principals contacted were identified by the district library supervisor or recently hired school librarians.

Interviews were similar to those of supervisors and HR representatives and were semi-structured, following a pre-determined protocol (see the Appendices for the complete protocol). The questions focused on the building-level responsibilities of the principal and how they conduct recruiting and hiring while keeping in consideration the needs, vision, and mission of their particular school.

Figure 3.10. Contacted and Participating Principals

District	Number of Principals Contacted	Number of Participating Principals
Cotesworth	4	2
Maine North	9	0
Paris	5	0
Red Rock	8	2
Sunville	3	1

3.7.4 Interviews with School Librarians

Data collection with school librarians in each district was conducted through interviews that differed slightly from the others. In this study, school librarians were considered an outside observer of the decision-making processes in recruiting and hiring. While school librarians take part from beginning to end and their hiring is a result of the decisions made, they have no authority in the process and, thus, offered a different perspective. Their participation provided a way to triangulate the data coming from the interviews with those people doing the hiring.

A protocol was used to conduct a semi-structured interview with the school librarians (see the Appendices for the complete protocol). The protocol included

questions similar to those of the other interviews, but focused on how the librarian was hired, as opposed to how they were involved in the decision-making process. The interviews remained semi-structured to allow participants to bring up related, but unforeseen, topics.

3.7.5 Triangulation of the Data

In case study research, it is ideal for the researcher to triangulate the data by using multiple sources: interviews, documents, and observations are a standard example (Yin, 2009). Unfortunately, such triangulation was not possible in this study. For legal reasons, it was highly unlikely I would ever have gotten approval from a school district to observe hiring practices. The events in hiring that are observable, such as the interview with a candidate, are typically confidential and the approval process for using such data would have required a much more rigorous IRB approval.

Additionally, a researcher can use document analysis to verify and triangulate the data that are obtained from interviews. In this particular study, such data is extremely limited. While participants did talk about some policies that are a part of the recruiting and hiring processes, such policies exist at such a high level that they do not directly affect the actual processes of recruiting and hiring. These policies are generally created at the state or district levels and are not concerned with recruiting and hiring, but rather with the legal stipulations that go into hiring practices, such as equal opportunity employment. Such policies are typically general to educators and not specific to librarians. Additionally, participants did not refer to any of these

documents or policies on a consistent basis. For this reason, they are not included in this study as a part of the data collected for analysis.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis was qualitative and categorized based on the research questions of the study. Analysis followed the step-by-step approach prescribed by Creswell (2009) for qualitative analysis:

1. *Organize and prepare the data for analysis:* This step involved transcribing interviews and scanning and uploading documents into NVivo.
2. *Read through all the data:* This process gave a sense of the overall data collected and how different pieces and sections related to the corresponding research questions.
3. *Begin detailed analysis with a coding process:* After familiarizing myself with the data, I used codes generated from the research questions to label the data. When necessary, codes were added, adjusted, and merged with repeated analysis of the data.
4. *Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting and people as well as categories or themes for analysis:* Through analysis of the codes, themes were developed and applied.
5. *Advance how the description and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative:* Themes were collated and all related data exported into corresponding research questions, developing a narrative for interpretation.

6. *Interpretation of the data for framework creation:* Data analysis led to an integration of how school librarians are recruited and hired with the theoretical lens of IT governance. The codes relating to the specific research questions were used to create this framework and are reported in the findings.

3.9 Summary of the Methods

The method used in this research was multiple case studies of five school district chosen to be as similar as possible in district population, number of schools, and EPP. While similar in some aspects, school districts were selected from different groups based on the library supervisors' responses to a survey about a) their participation and b) the participation of others in the hiring of school librarians. The data collected from each school district were interviews about the district's recruiting and hiring practices with principals, individuals in HR, library supervisors, and school librarians. Data analysis was conducted through iterative coding from themes in the research questions with continuous adjustments as new themes developed.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter presents the findings of this study. The first section of this chapter is an overview of the general tasks and processes that most school districts go through in recruiting and hiring school librarians. It includes definitions for each of these tasks and the order in which they are most often completed. Following the overview of the general process, I present the findings for each of the five case studies. Each case begins with a description of the school district, followed by descriptions of that district's practices in recruiting, hiring, and transfer hires. As stated previously, the findings focus on the following research questions:

1. How do school districts make decisions about recruiting and hiring school librarians?
 - a. How does the organizational structure of the school district influence the decision-making processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians?
 - b. How do school district policies and procedures influence the decision-making processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians?
 - c. How do the actual processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians adhere to or differ from school district policies or procedures?
2. How do the specific knowledge sets held by different district-level departments influence the decision-making of principals regarding recruiting and hiring school librarians at the building level?
 - a. How are school district library supervisors involved in making building-level recruiting and hiring decisions?
 - b. How are human resource departments involved in making building-level recruiting and hiring decisions?

- c. In what ways, if any, do principals, supervisors, and human resource departments coordinate on decisions on recruiting and hiring school librarians?

4.1 General Tasks and Processes

This section includes an overview of the general process that school districts go through while recruiting and hiring school librarians. In presenting the process, definitions are provided for key actions and strategies used in each process. As will be discussed, transfer hires feature prominently in the school districts taking part in this study. The process of hiring transfers will be discussed separately from new hires throughout this chapter.

The way in which a school district or individual completes a task in these processes can be considered formal or informal. A **formal process** is one governed by a policy, set of steps, or documentation in the school district. In a formal process, each individual in the school district is meant to perform tasks in the same manner. In an **informal process**, policies and guiding steps or documentation may not be readily available. A district may do things a certain way, but that practice is more likely to be verbally agreed upon, as opposed to formally written and set in place by guiding policies. Different steps in the recruiting and hiring processes can be varying degrees of formal or informal, or may include some combination of both types of processes.

4.1.1 Recruiting

Recruiting candidates to apply for open positions begins the process of bringing school librarians into the district. The recruiting process includes word-of-

mouth recruiting, job postings, job fairs, recruiting through certification programs, creating district cohorts for certification programs, and evaluating the recruiting process.

When a district becomes aware that a school library position will be open, word-of-mouth recruiting is often the first tactic used by most schools and districts trying to hire for a position. **Word-of-mouth recruiting** includes any action on behalf of a school or school district in which current employees reach out to potential candidates for positions in an informal manner; it is used both inside and outside a school district. As this is specifically for recruiting purposes, the word-of-mouth strategy must come from the efforts of someone already working in the school district. If word-of-mouth tactics are used by an applicant, this is referred to as applicant efforts. **Applicant efforts** include any interaction in which an applicant specifically reaches out to someone inside the district to obtain information about an opening.

Depending on the district and certain procedural requirements, additional recruiting techniques include job postings and job advertisements. **Job postings** come in a number of different formats, and their detail and descriptiveness of positions available vary. Job postings may appear on district websites, social media, traditional print advertisements, listservs, online job aggregators, and many other places. The terms jobs postings and job advertisements (job ads) are used interchangeably.

At some point in the recruiting process, school districts may hold or attend **job fairs** to offer an opportunity for prospective applicants to seek out a number of

positions in a short amount of time. There are three types of job fairs discussed in this study:

- **Unidistrict job fairs** are events held by a school district in which any school in the district seeking to hire for a position may send representatives for their school. Attendees are job seekers from both within and outside the school district and may take the opportunity to talk with specific schools, all at the same event.
- **Transfer job fairs** are events held by a school district in which any school in the district seeking to hire for a position may send representatives for an exhibit booth for their school. Attendees are current employees of the school district who are considering or actively looking for a new position in the same school district. These job fairs are not open to individuals not already employed by the school district.
- **Multidistrict jobs fairs** are events held at places like universities or convention centers. They are typically sponsored by the university, a state Department of Education, or are attached to a professional conference. These job fairs may have exhibit space for individual schools, but more often are used to advertise and recruit for whole school districts. Districts will hand out recruiting materials and discuss available positions with potential applicants. Unlike unidistrict or transfer job fairs, the districts exhibiting may not be recruiting for specific positions, but instead are recruiting for people to apply to be a part of a candidate pool for available positions in the district.

Job fairs typically occur during the hiring season at the end of the school year and during the summer. At that time, school districts hope to know how many positions will be available and that job announcements for those positions are already posted.

In addition to attending multidistrict job fairs, a district may find others ways to connect with students at local universities that have school library certification programs. **Visits to pre-service students** are one way for representatives from HR or library services to be in touch with university programs and to visit students seeking certification in school librarianship. Such visits may include specific recruiting efforts or come in the form of a supervisor attending classes as a guest lecturer or expert in the field.

The previous actions taken by districts are completed regularly during the hiring season and are meant to recruit for positions for the next school year. A long-term recruiting tactic by a school district is the creation of **cohorts for school library certification programs**. In districts with a shortage of school library candidates, creating cohorts to attend a certification program can be one recruiting solution. Cohorts involve recruiting current district staff—library aides, classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and other staff—to go through a certification program together. Tuition for students in these cohorts is sometimes funded by the school district, grants obtained by cooperation between the school district and a university, or a combination of funding between the students in the cohort and any of these institutions. For example, at the University of Maryland in 2005–2007, there were eight teachers from DC Public Schools who completed the MLS program as a cohort.

Their tuition was paid through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

As a part of the recruiting process, a district may evaluate its strategies and practices in recruiting. **Evaluating the recruiting process** includes any formal or informal efforts by the school district to assess or change the district's efforts in recruiting school librarians.

4.1.2 Hiring

During and after recruiting, the hiring process begins. Unlike the recruiting process, in which all tasks are completed by the school district, the hiring process has tasks completed by the school district and applicants to the district. Events during the hiring process include the application process, screening applicants, creating candidate pools, conducting interviews, selecting final candidates, making job offers and finalizing paperwork, conveying the terms of provisional employment, and evaluating hiring processes.

Typically, the first step in the process of hiring is for an individual to fill out an application. The **application process** includes any online or print paperwork necessary before the screening or review process can begin. The application process is typically formal, with applicants filling out specific forms and submitting required documents and qualifications. The process of "applying" to a position can be significantly different for transfers, which is addressed in the next section.

Once an individual has submitted an application to a school district, a screening process may begin. Throughout this study, there is a distinction in the hiring process between an applicant and a candidate for a position. An **applicant** is any individual who has applied for a job in the school district. A **candidate** for a position is an individual who has passed the screening process. For the purposes of this study, **the screening process** is any step that occurs before an applicant is placed in a candidate pool or recommended to building-level personnel for an interview. Depending on the school, the screening process could include such actions as:

- **Reviewing Applications and Qualifications:** This task includes the logistical process of reviewing applications for experience and qualifications once completed by applicants. It includes reviewing applications to ensure that the applicant is qualified and working with the applicant to be certain that all of the necessary paperwork and certifications are correct and current.
- **Screening Interviews:** Once applications are reviewed, some districts conduct screening interviews. These interviews are events in which district personnel interview an applicant before placing them in a candidate pool for review by building-level personnel.
- **Other Evaluations:** Beyond screening interviews, a district may formally require an applicant to complete other tasks before being considered a candidate for a position. Such tasks may include performing a mock lesson plan, providing writing samples, or role playing conversations with parents or

community members. If performed, such evaluations are typically a part of standard protocol and are considered formal procedures.

After completing the screening process, a school has created a candidate pool. A **candidate pool** is a group of individuals who have passed the screening process. If a district uses a candidate pool, then this is the group of individuals from which building-level personnel may draw from to interview for a position.

Some districts do not create candidate pools. In these districts, any applicant is considered a candidate and that person can be selected for an interview. For districts that use candidate pools, it is at this stage that the interviewing begins. The **interview** includes actions in which building-level personnel question a candidate's appropriateness for a position. Interviews have two major factors: the parties involved in conducting the interview and the content of the interview. In differentiating screening interviews from candidate interviews, building-level personnel must be involved in a candidate interview; however, this requirement does not exclude district-level personnel from participating in the building-level interview. The content of the interview may involve questions about a number of issues, including the candidate's ideas and philosophies on teaching, school libraries, collaboration, and program management.

After interviews are conducted at the building level, a final hiring decision or **selection** is made, choosing one candidate from all of those interviewed. The decision of selection could rest with one individual or an entire group.

Once a decision is made on who to hire, the next task is to make a job offer to the selected candidate. The **job offer** can include re-verifying the certification and qualifications of the candidate, making a formal offer, having the candidate sign a contract, and completing any paperwork involved in provisional employment (discussed in the next section).

As a part of the hiring process, a district may evaluate its strategies and practices in hiring. **Evaluating the hiring process** includes any formal or informal efforts by the school district to evaluate or change the district's efforts in recruiting school librarians.

4.1.3 Transfer Hires

It was the intention of this study to look at the recruiting and hiring practices concerning school librarians who were new to their positions. Enlisting individuals to participate in the study was difficult, and when asking new hires to participate I came up against a major complication: while some librarians were new to their position and many were new to their role as a librarian, many of the participants in the study were transfer hires. A **transfer hire** is the filling of a position with someone who is already employed by the school and/or school district. The previous position of the hire is typically either a school librarian from another school in the district or a former classroom teacher. Transfer hires, who were formerly classroom teachers, can come from within the school or from somewhere else in the school district. This prevalence of transfers was evident from those interviewed for the study and the way they talked

about other librarians new to their positions in the school district. For instance, Ms. Young of Cotesworth School District said:

Most of the media specialists that I know...were all hired within the same school they worked in or at least [came from] the school district. The few I can think of who were hired in the past years were already working at that school in a different role or maybe transferred within [the district].

Ms. Standish of Maine North School District stated, “Most school librarians in the district were classroom teachers first. That’s what I’ve heard at least, from the ones I have met.”

The prevalence of transfer hires over new hires in these school districts warranted further detail in the findings of this study. Employees who transfer from one position to another in their own school or district are not recruited or hired in the same way as new hires. The transfer process is typically more informal and often occurs in a shorter timeframe than for new hires. Additionally, although the district-level offices of HR and library services are often involved in recruiting and hiring new individuals into the district, they are less likely to be involved in the transfer process, though there are exceptions.

The tasks and events in transfer hires include recruiting internally, employee efforts, intent forms and transfer requests, informal hiring inquiries and interviews, the transfer process, and district-level involvement in transfers. Throughout the findings, the minutiae of the transfer processes of each school district are not described at the same level as recruiting and hiring in this study, but because how

frequently transfers are hired over new school librarians, how they affect the recruiting and hiring processes must be considered.

The transfer process is often more informal than recruiting and hiring processes. The most formal way for the transfer process to begin is through intent forms or transfer requests. In the transfer process, this paperwork replaces the application used for new hires. **Intent forms** and **transfer requests** are documents created at both the building and district levels that inform the administration of an employee's desire to transfer positions. These documents may exist formally at the district level and be a part of an official process, or they may be informal documents specific to an individual school and created by the principal.

In other instances, the transfer process may begin with a school or district **recruiting internally**, very similar to word-of-mouth recruiting, which includes any efforts by district- or building-level personnel to recruit for a position within their own school or district. Internal recruiting can begin with or without the involvement of individuals or offices at the district level. Such efforts may be through word-of-mouth or transfer job fairs. Regardless, these efforts are focused solely on recruiting someone who already works for the school or school district.

From an alternative beginning point, a transfer may begin with the efforts of the employee to be transferred. **Employee efforts** include any efforts by an employee to transfer within a school or school district. The most frequent example of efforts made by the employee is the **informal hiring inquiry**, in which an employee makes an effort to speak with district- or building-level administrators about open school

library positions in their school or district. An informal inquiry may occur before an open position is officially posted by the school or district. This inquiry by a potential transfer may be followed immediately, or at a later date, by an **informal interview**, a discussion between the potential transfer and a building administrator that acts the same way as an interview does for a new hire. To be considered an informal interview, the conversation must occur before any job posting or announcement is made. After an announcement is made, such a discussion is no longer unique to the transfer, who has no more knowledge of an open position than does any applicant in the general public.

Transfer hires are selected and finalized after all internal forms, inquiries, and conversations have occurred. This process can differ greatly among districts and even between schools in a district. To be considered a **complete transfer hire**, all actions must take place before an announcement is posted to the public. If the district makes a public announcement because of hiring policies, but no outside candidates are actually considered for a position because an internal transfer is already planned, this would still be considered a complete transfer hire. When an internal candidate must go through the entire process in the same way as an outside candidate, they are only considered a **partial transfer hire**. While they are still a transfer hire, the process may be significantly more involved for an internal candidate than it is to go through a more informal transfer process.

Not all of the stated tasks and events related here for recruiting, hiring, and transfer hires occur in every district or for every hire in a district. Additionally, they

may not occur in the same order. However, this is the general process used in districts, and deviations from this process will be highlighted throughout the findings. This chapter continues with a presentation of the findings for each school district.

4.2 Cotesworth School District

Cotesworth School District is located in South Atlantic U.S. Census Division. It is a county district just outside a major metropolitan area, and the U.S. Census categorizes it as suburban in population and density. Magazines such as *Forbes* have named the county as having one of the highest average household incomes in the country. Further demographic details about the district and its students are in Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

I chose this district for participation in the study as representative of the school districts in which the library supervisor has very little involvement in the hiring of school librarians and a low number of people or groups involved overall in the hiring processes.

The state in which Cotesworth is located has policies regarding the staffing of school libraries with certified school librarians in each school. However, these policies do not apply to Cotesworth, which is part of a special, statewide program that allows districts and schools to be more flexible with their staffing allotments. To be certified as a school librarian in the state, one must have a Master of Library Science or Master of Library Media Technology. The library supervisor stated that one could get an add-on endorsement for libraries as a teacher, but “no one is going for that anymore because it’s practically worthless.”

Figure 4.1: Cotesworth School District Details

Population Density	Suburban: Large
Student Population	45,000
Number of Schools	36
Teachers (FTE)	2,400
Student to Teacher Ratio	17.13
Librarians	22
District expenditures per pupil	\$9,000
FARMS	17%

Figure 4.2: Cotesworth Student Demographics

Hispanic or Latino	6.2%
White	94.5%
Black or African American	0.7%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.3%
Asian	0.7%
Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.0%
Some other race	2.6%
Population of two or more races	1.1%

Participants

- **Mr. Moss** is the Chief Technology and Information Officer (CTIO) in Cotesworth. He had just started in this position at the time of his interview. He reports directly to the superintendent, and media services is just one of the departments he supervises. He has previous experience as a classroom teacher and a professor in graduate programs.
- **Ms. Hayes** is the Coordinator of Library Media Services. She was a media specialist on special assignment, which is an entirely new position for the

school district. She reports to Mr. Moss. Her previous experience is as a media specialist in other school districts in the state.

- **Ms. Lyman** is the Chief Officer of Human Resources and reports directly to the superintendent. She has been in human resources for more than 15 years and has previous experience in elementary, secondary, and higher education.
- **Ms. Cregg** has been an elementary principal in Cotesworth for eight years and reports to the superintendent and associate superintendents. She has previous experience in teaching middle school and five years as an assistant principal.
- **Ms. Seaborn** has been a middle school principal in Cotesworth for eight years and has opened more than one school for Cotesworth. She has more than three decades of experience teaching and administrating middle schools.
- **Ms. McGarry** has been a middle school librarian in the district for three years. Previously, she has two decades of experience teaching elementary and middle school and has been in Cotesworth for 15 years. She is also certified to be an instructional technology specialist (ITS), but chose to apply for positions as a media specialist.
- **Ms. Young** was in her first year as an elementary school librarian at the time of her interview, but was a transfer from within the school district and was previously teaching middle school and high school. She has a Master of Instructional Technology and is certified to be a school librarian in the state.
- **Ms. Ziegler** was also in her first year as an elementary school librarian and had previous experience for more than a decade in teaching elementary school.

She is a transfer from within Cotesworth, where she was previously a classroom teacher. She has a Master of Learning and Instructional Technology from an ALA-accredited institution.

4.2.1 Recruiting

Recruiting efforts in Cotesworth School District rely heavily on word-of-mouth, and the district's appeal is, according to Ms. Lyman of HR, due to being "one of the top school districts in the country when it comes to technology." Positions in the school district are highly sought after, sometimes with too many candidates applying, said one principal.

Ms. Lyman of HR stated that current employees reaching out to possible applicants using word-of-mouth was a major recruiting tactic in their district. "If someone knows someone..., [principals] can ask anyone involved or knowledgeable at the central office level, but they don't have to." She also specifically mentioned principals and district administrators asking the better-respected media specialists in the district if they knew of anyone available before seeking out new hires from outside the district. Ms. Lyman said that the only place the district is required to post a job opening is on a website sponsored by the state Department of Education.

The Director of IT, who is the senior administrator for school libraries, Mr. Moss, agreed that getting a job in the district is definitely about "who you know." The library supervisor, Ms. Hayes, agreed: "If a teacher knows someone and recommends them for a position in the school, that's how that position is going to be filled."

Regarding job postings, Mr. Lyman stated, “Each school is required to put up a job ad when a position is available,” though he did not elaborate on where those openings were posted.

As a principal, Ms. Seaborn indicated that whether she uses word-of-mouth as a recruiting tactic depends on the position for which she is hiring: “I may want someone who knows our system and how it operates” or sometimes “I purposely want outside blood, new ideas, a new way of looking at things.” She takes the recommendations of others in the school district very seriously. In her last two instance of hiring a school librarian, she had received suggestions of people to interview from the central instructional technology department (where the library services department is housed), but she emphasized that she was not required to do it and that her most recent hire was not a recommendation from that department.

The recently hired librarians in Cotesworth School District, some of whom were transfer hires, indicated that word-of-mouth is extremely important in the process of being hired. Ms. McGarry, when asked about the effectiveness of recruiting efforts in Cotesworth, stated that her experience was excellent, but “I am not sure it was excellent for those who did not happen to hear about it.... It was such a quick turnaround.... For those who didn’t get word-of-mouth, that’s a shame.”

While the state requires that jobs be posted on the Department of Education’s website, it appears that the district may not require them to be posted anywhere else. Neither Ms. Lyman of HR nor Mr. Moss of the IT department indicated any additional required postings, and Principal Seaborn was of the impression that all

postings were optional. Principal Seaborn stated that she does not always put up postings for positions. In one specific instance, she said she was opening up a new school as the principal. In that case, “people know you’re opening a school and you need all the positions,” and so there is no need to advertise. Additionally, she indicated that such advertisements can be cumbersome. Confirming statements by those at the district level, she discussed the advantages of recruiting and hiring someone through word-of-mouth:

When I know someone who has already caught my teachers’ eye or a fellow administrator’s eye, and they know what kind of teacher we are looking for at Cotesworth, then I would go with those avenues first.... Sometimes when we post [an opening], that can bring in tons of emails from people who are interested, and sometimes that just doesn’t pan out as far as the time expended in going through all the resumes.

While describing autonomy in an administrator’s decision to advertise or not, Ms. Seaborn did relate that the last school librarian she hired found out about the position by going through the job listings posted by HR on the district’s website.

Ms. Ziegler, a school librarian in Cotesworth, had much to say about posting jobs:

I would like there to be somewhere you could see what positions are open. In our county, if you know you have a position open, you keep it to yourself, because you know who you want to hire already. You don’t know if a principal is hiring a media specialist, you just have to ask.... I don’t know the process if you want to apply besides asking your principal to ask someone else who is a principal. It’s a lot who you know in this county [instead of] knowing what postings for a job are there. It would be nice if it were a little more formal so you could see what your options really are.

In Cotesworth, there is very little recruiting effort beyond job postings and word-of-mouth. The only job fair mentioned was a transfer job fair. Ms. Ziegler, a school librarian, stated that if a school can find a good candidate for a position at the transfer job fair from the staff desiring a transfer, then the school would not open up the position to applicants outside the district. She was not aware whether school librarians would actually find any available positions at this job fair. No other individual in Cotesworth made any specific mention of using other job fairs as a form of recruitment. District-level administrators in Cotesworth also made no efforts to conduct pre-service visits to school library certification programs or create cohorts from within the school district to attend such programs. With the appeal of the school district drawing in many candidates, such efforts appear to be unnecessary. No one in the district made any mention of formally or informally evaluating recruiting efforts.

4.2.2 Hiring

In a district like Cotesworth where principals have far more autonomy in how they conduct hiring, the application process is not as structured as in other districts. Additionally, there is less involvement from individuals at the district level. For instance, neither HR nor the district library supervisors conduct screening interviews to create a pool of applicants from which principals can select individuals to interview. This is in keeping with their district's process of building-level administrators having a great deal of autonomy in recruiting and hiring. The candidate pool is created by those who apply for a position. There is no intermediary

between principals and the active pool of applicants who have applied. Ms. Lyman in HR stated that principals are able to view application materials as soon as they are completed. After viewing these materials, principals can bring in anyone they want for an interview.

The library supervisors, Ms. Hayes, and her superior, Mr. Moss, also have no involvement in the interview process. Instead of using the expertise or assistance of those at the district level, principals in Cotesworth mentioned relying on individuals in their schools. With technology integration being such a high priority in Cotesworth, many principals look for a school librarian who can pair well with an instructional technology specialist (ITS). The roles of librarian and ITS can be matched in different ways. Principal Seaborn, for instance, sees them as complementary: both individuals should be well-versed in instruction, resources, and technology, with the school librarian focusing more on the resources and the ITS focusing more on technology. Another principal, Ms. Cregg, leaves such decisions on allotments completely open when assessing her school's needs and looks first at the candidate pool before deciding what she wants. Instead of providing specific qualifications in a job ad or in discussion with others, Ms. Cregg will leave items like the certification requirements open-ended. She said that it allows her to review candidates who may not have otherwise been "qualified," but their experience and other qualifications may make them perfectly suitable for the position. Specifically, she said she would not necessarily require a school library certificate as a prerequisite for a position in the

school library, because she may find that someone with different certification to be a better fit.

Principal Seaborn described in detail how she uses other faculty in her school to hire all staff. She typically begins the hiring process by screening individuals for hire, either by reviewing their applications and/or speaking with them in a brief screening interview. She selects a few candidates she thinks will work well within the school, all of whom she is willing to hire, and then has a panel of faculty and others at the building-level interview those candidates more thoroughly. She said that sometimes she sits in on the panel interviews, but there are times when she leaves the hiring process almost entirely up to the hiring panel she assigns. She has the hiring panel make a selection and always goes with their recommendation, which is why she tries to screen candidates in advance of placing them in front of a hiring panel. For her recent hire of a school librarian, she had her instructional technology specialist (ITS) conduct the interviews for the school librarian. As stated previously, the ITS and the school librarian work together very closely in her school, so she considered the ITS conducting the interviews to be analogous to the process she uses with teachers hiring other teachers.

At another school in Cotesworth, Ms. McGarry was hired to be a school librarian in a process similar to the one described by Principal Seaborn. She went in for an initial interview with the principal and the ITS, then was asked to return for a second interview conducted by a hiring panel. In another school, the librarian, Ms. Young, was only interviewed by the principal. However, she explained that this was a

special circumstance. The school was getting a new assistant principal and ITS, so there was no one to assist the principal in the interview. However, Ms. Young stated that now they also use panels to hire other individuals for the school and that she is a member of the hiring committee.

In the first interview Ms. McGarry went through with the principal and the ITS, she said that content was focused mostly on how she might work with the ITS. Ms. McGarry felt the principal, Ms. North, was really looking to see how their personalities worked with one another. Her second interview with a hiring panel of other school staff focused on teaching and learning, how she would run the media center, her ideas for lessons and curriculum, and other skills.

With the school district guided mostly by site-based decision-making, Ms. Lyman of HR said that the decision of selecting the final candidate for an open position typically resides with the principal. A principal will make a recommendation for hire to HR, who will complete the request. As demonstrated by the hiring panels used in multiple schools, principals can involve whomever they choose at the building level. However, ultimately the decision belongs to the principal, and no one at the district level has much to do with it. Ms. Lyman noted that the practice of site-based selection was not because of any policies or procedures put into place, but that it's just "good practice."

Principal Cregg said she could not express enough the importance of the level of autonomy that allows principals to make the final selection decision:

We're the top-ranked public school that's listed in [our state].... Many of my colleagues are in the top ten in [our state]. I strongly feel that it has a lot to do with the autonomy we're given, the flexibility we are given within our buildings, and not confined to thinking of things in a traditional manner.

While Principal Seaborn also feels similarly in regard to the autonomy they are afforded, she relies heavily on others at the building level to assist in hiring anyone in her school, as was stated earlier. The decision of selection stays at the school, but there is a hiring committee that makes a recommendation of who to hire, and Ms. Seaborn could not think of a time when she had gone against the recommendation of the committee.

Regarding the evaluation of hiring processes in Cotesworth, most participants had nothing to say and little to no interest in changing the current processes. The Director of IT, Mr. Moss, said:

I wouldn't say that I'm unhappy with the way things are done, but I would like to see our department more involved in the process. I don't want to be telling principals who to hire, but I would like them to ask us for assistance when they need it and to help them in hiring. It's not that only bad people are hiring, it's that things are currently hit or miss, and that could be improved upon.

The library supervisor, Ms. Hayes, agreed with him on this point. They are both relatively new to their positions and are trying to become more involved, but at the time of their interview, their involvement was uncertain.

4.2.3 Transfer Hires

The library supervisor in Cotesworth indicated that HR's involvement in recruiting is passive; they largely leave that responsibility at the building level. At

each school, principals often reach out to individuals in their buildings, asking teachers if someone is interested in working in the library (or with instructional technology, depending on their chosen allotment), or if they know of anyone searching for a position that meets the school's teaching philosophy. Since word-of-mouth is more likely to reach someone internally than externally, this can often result in transfer hires instead of new hires.

Principals will often find out about the interest of one of their teachers, or another teacher in the school district, being interested in a school library position through the efforts of the applicant, or in the case of transfers, the employee wishing to make a transfer. In Cotesworth, the librarians interviewed, who were transfer hires, said that their own efforts factored in prominently to their being hired to their current position. Ms. McGarry heard about her position while she was teaching summer school and decided to apply for a transfer. Ms. Young completed her internship for her school library certification at the school where she was already teaching in the classroom. When the former librarian decided to leave, Ms. Young went to both the outgoing and incoming principals and expressed her interest in transferring from the classroom to the school library. She interviewed at other schools as well, but liked the principal coming to the school and wanted to stay.

Ms. Ziegler went through a similar situation in her own school when she found out that the former school librarian was retiring. She spoke with her principal during her end-of-year review as a classroom teacher. In that review, she expressed her interest in being the librarian the next year. They discussed her credentials, and

Ms. Ziegler informed the principal of some ideas she had for the library. Once the principal knew what her allotments were for the next school year, she told Ms. Ziegler that the transfer was granted. This was the only interview in which Ms. Ziegler participated. She had little knowledge of how an applicant would apply without knowing anyone: “I don’t know the process if you want to apply besides asking your principal to ask someone else who is a principal.”

Such informal interviews are not always the case. Ms. Young was working as a classroom teacher and wanted to move to a librarian position within the district. She expressed her interest in transferring to her principal before he moved to another position, and then she sent an email to her new principal. Her new principal, not knowing her at all, did conduct a more formal interview for the position. Ms. Young also interviewed at other schools in the district, but she wanted to stay at her current school.

Principal Cregg found out that her current school librarian wanted to move from the classroom to the library at the end of the previous school year. Toward the end of each school year, she has faculty inform her of any desire to transfer within or outside the school by submitting an intent form. Ms. Ziegler said that intent forms are mostly used in elementary schools where transfers from grade to grade are more common. This transfer becomes even easier if, as in the case of Cotesworth, school librarians are on the same contracts as teachers. Little to no paperwork is necessary to complete the transfer, so the efforts of a transfer applicant can go a long way in securing a school library position.

Also in Cotesworth, Ms. Ziegler pointed out that there is a transfer job fair, which is only open to people currently employed by the school district. This transfer job fair occurs before any unidistrict job fairs for outside candidates take place. Ms. Ziegler said that it is common for a school to fill all of its open positions, including the school librarian, with transfer hires from Cotesworth and to not review outside candidates at all.

The finalization process for transfer hires is much less effort as compared to new hires in Cotesworth. Ms. Young had minimal contact with HR; she just needed to register her new school library certificate with them and the transfer was complete: “[My principal] let them know I was changing positions. That’s pretty standard for the county, the principal just notifies [HR] there’s a change.” Ms. Ziegler agreed that the process was easy and there was not much contact necessary.

4.2.4 Cotesworth Case Summary

In Cotesworth School District, the district administration gives principals almost complete autonomy in the recruiting and hiring of school librarians. The school district library supervisor and her superior, the Director of IT, have almost no involvement in the recruiting and hiring processes. This autonomy is noted even before recruiting begins, in the allotment for positions in a school. The district allows principals to determine whether they will include a school library position in their budget, or use that funding for a different position in the school. Recruiting is also done at the building level using the word-of-mouth tactic almost exclusively.

Recruiting is of little concern because participants in the district indicated that there is a surplus of candidates for available positions. How individuals schools conduct hiring varies (some schools choose to use hiring panels and some do not), but is nearly always completed at just the building level. Principals can determine whether to conduct hiring on their own or in partnership with others at the district level. Transfer hires in the district were relatively common, as those in the district were often the first to find out about open positions through informal inquiries to others and the use of word-of-mouth. Overall, the district puts decision-making mostly at the building level without input from district-level offices, making it's governance entirely site-based and decentralized.

4.3 Maine North School District

Maine North School District is located in the East South Central U.S. Census Division. It is a county district incorporating a major metropolitan area, and the U.S. Census categorizes it as urban in population and density. Further demographic details about the district and its students are in Figures 4.3 and 4.4.

I chose this district for participation in this study from the group of school districts in which the library supervisor had little involvement in the hiring of school librarians and there was a low to medium number of people or groups involved overall in the recruiting and hiring processes.

The state in which Maine North is located requires that every elementary and secondary school have a certified librarian to maintain the school library. Certification requirements state that a school librarian must have a Master of Library Science. However, there are numerous stipulations that provide for provisional employment of teachers on a temporary basis while working toward their MLS.

Figure 4.3: Maine North School District Details

Population Density	City: Large
Student Population	100,000
Number of Schools	174
Teachers (FTE)	5,800
Student to Teacher Ratio	17.18
Librarians	143
District expenditures per pupil	\$12,700
FARMS	73%

Figure 4.4: Maine North Student Demographics

Hispanic or Latino	2.2%
White	69.7%
Black or African American	24.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.2%
Asian	1.4%
Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.0%
Some other race	1.1%
Population of two or more races	2.7%

Participants

- **Mr. Reynolds** is the library supervisor of Maine North. At the time of his interview, he had held that position for 18 years. He has experience as a library supervisor, school librarian, and classroom teacher in other districts before coming to Maine North.
- **Ms. Clark** is a staffing specialist in Human Resources. She has a PhD in Educational Leadership and a Master of Reading Education. At the time of her interview, she had been in Human Resources for 10 years and had worked in Maine North for almost 20 years. She held multiple positions in Human Resources before becoming a staffing specialist.
- **Ms. Bender** is a school librarian at a high school in Maine North, and it was her second year at the time of her interview. She has 14 years of experience as a school librarian and had worked for a few years as a district cataloger. She has a Master of School Library Media and has National Board Certification.
- **Ms. Johnson** is a school librarian who was in her fifth year at a Maine North high school at the time of her interview. She was previously a high school

English teacher. She has her Master of Library Media Education, and the district hired her provisionally for her position one year before finishing her degree.

- **Ms. Standish** is a school librarian at a Maine North elementary school. She had been in her position for just over a year at the time of her interview. She has a Master of Library Media Education. Her only other teaching experience was as a substitute in the school district before she was hired as a librarian.
- There were no principals who had recently hired school librarians that were available or willing to participate in this study.

4.3.1 Recruiting

According to Mr. Reynolds, Maine North has an ample number of candidates in a pool every year. He said that some of these individuals stay in the pool year after year, waiting for a position to open up in the district. Mr. Reynolds attributes the strength of this candidate pool in part to having one of the highest salaries for faculty in the region. In his opinion, the school district is also supportive of the library program, which makes the district attractive. He also referenced the state law, which requires each school to have a certified school librarian and, though there have been exceptions, Mr. Reynolds believes that the district has attempted to uphold the requirement as much as possible. Additionally, school-based councils and principals sometimes decide to have a library aide, as well, which can be very attractive to an applicant. He could only recall being understaffed at the beginning of the school year

once in his 18 years in his position as the supervisor, and that was only in one school where the principal and school were having trouble finding a person who was the “right fit.”

Mr. Reynolds stated that word-of-mouth is how a number of potential applicants or transfer hires from within the district end up speaking with him. He indicated that principals are very aware of his position in the school district, in part because of some of his other duties with textbooks, curriculum resources, and technology. He said teachers often contact him after speaking with their principals or their school’s librarian and express interest in becoming a school librarian. Those building-level individuals often refer interested teachers to Mr. Reynolds, who then discusses possibilities with them, both for getting their certificate for school librarianship and the available positions in the district. Mr. Reynolds also stated that he often finds that principals, when they know they have a school librarian retiring or transferring, will have a teacher or librarian “waiting in the wings” to fill a position. No job opening is posted, and so these positions are filled either by the efforts of the transferring candidate, through “word-of-mouth,” or a combination of the two.

In Maine North School District, Ms. Clark in HR was very clear about the actions the district takes toward posting job advertisements:

We post our positions on our website and the [State] Department of Education’s website. Those are the only places that get updated perpetually. We are exploring alternate ways to advertise our positions, but right now, it’s just on our application site and then the [State] Department of Education. There’s nothing done specifically for librarians. They’re on the list posted along with the other positions.

Other participants in Maine North School District made no comments to support or contradict this process.

In addition to job postings, Ms. Clark talked about attending multidistrict job fairs at universities where new graduates are entering the field of education. However, she stated that specific recruiting for school librarians is often not the focus. HR is not purposefully in contact with the departments or colleges granting degrees in library science and mostly work with colleges of education. She said they would like to be in touch with library departments, but that there is no specific plan in place to do so. The library supervisor, Mr. Reynolds, said that he does not visit job fairs or pre-service programs for school librarians. He does have a relationship with the local university and is invited to guest lecture on occasion. When visiting these classes, students may ask him about getting a job and look for suggestions or tips, but he did not mention doing these visits for recruiting purposes. It is more an opportunity to share his experiences with pre-service individuals.

Regarding the evaluation of recruiting tactics in the district, Ms. Clark in HR mentioned a number of ways in which recruiting processes might be changed. At the time of her interview in the fall, Ms. Clark mentioned that it was the time of year in which they evaluate their recruiting efforts and decide what changes need to be made for the upcoming recruiting season in the spring. She mentioned specifically that she wanted to be more intentional regarding the district's efforts for recruiting school librarians, as they have had to be more creative in recent years, due to a decrease in

the number of available applicants. Her efforts on being more intentional focused on the fact that their efforts in recruiting were not laid out in a specific plan, but were mostly reactionary to communication with local universities that have school library certification programs and minor efforts to reach out to graduates of those programs each spring.

While recruiting is not a concern overall, the library supervisor, Mr. Reynolds, did mention minority representation as an issue in recruiting. He has been working with human resources to pay more attention to recruiting minority candidates, as they are not represented in the population of school librarians. He was the only participant in any of the school districts to mention this as a concern in the processes of recruiting and hiring.

4.3.2 Hiring

In Maine North School District, applicants are required to fill out a general application before being considered for a position. Ms. Standish, a librarian, stated that the application she completed was for a K-12 school library position; she believed any school looking to hire a school librarian could review her application and send her a request for an interview.

Once applications are complete, HR reviews them to make sure that the applicant meets the qualifications before they can become a part of the candidate pool. In Maine North, HR first considers whether a person is qualified to be a school librarian. Ms. Clark in HR stated: “We are going to entertain any applicant who is

minimally qualified. If we have a healthy pool we can start making decisions about what's most appropriate for a school setting.” In describing the creation of a candidate pool, Ms. Clark stated:

My role would be to search our applicant pool and come up with a list of candidates for the school in need of filling a vacancy.... We screen the applicants for minimum qualifications, then send the names of the qualified applicants to the principals or departments, so they can see.... We send that list of about ten people—for library, we don't typically have ten applicants.

This list of names will usually be accompanied by an application, resume, references, and supporting documentation, but Ms. Clark said that during peak hiring times they may just send a school a list of names and ask the school to contact candidates for information on their own.

Maine North is in a state that requires school librarians to be certified through the completion of a master's program. Ms. Clark stated that they have a number of applicants who were previously public, university, or another type of librarian, but because they do not have certification in K-12 school librarianship, they are not eligible for school positions. Ms. Clark said she would like to see some kind of provision for those individuals so that they do not have to complete the school library certification, as they are already trained as librarians.

While there is not a provision in Maine North for other types of librarians who already have their MLS, there is a provision for those who have already started a school library certification program. If an individual has completed at least nine credit hours toward certification and commits to completing the program, he/she can be

provisionally hired as a school librarian. When reviewing applications, Ms. Clark said that previous experience and whether the person had completed their practicum in Maine North were valuable indicators in getting past the initial screening process.

Once HR reviews qualifications and creates a candidate pool, the supervisor, Mr. Reynolds, does informal and unofficial screening interviews. He conducts these over the summer or when there is a shortage in the pool of available candidates. He stated that these interviews are a good time for him to evaluate a candidate's professional needs: if a principal were to hire this candidate, what kind of support would the library services department have to provide them? He made it clear that these are not official interviews; he is simply looking to see if an applicant is someone they would like to have in the candidate pool. In his time as supervisor, the relationship with HR has changed, and he is more certain of the role he has to play in the hiring process:

When I first came here, I was not sure if I was invading Human Resource's territory [in conducting screening interviews], so I tread very carefully. And then I discovered that they wanted all the help they could get and that it was not a territorial thing.... I almost have to remind myself and others, we are not part of Human Resources. So we can go this far and then that is it.... By knowing our role and staying within the boundaries of our role, it keeps us as a good partner with Human Resources. I do not ever pick up the phone and call, and say, "Hey, I just met this great librarian, John. You need to hire him." I would never do that. I would never call a principal and say I just met this great librarian. You need to hire him. That is not my job. Now if they call me, I might say, "Well, I have got John, and I have got Mary, and I have got Sally. And I will send you their contact information and let me know what you think of them." I might do that, but it's not my role to tell them who to hire.

As mentioned previously in the recruiting process, Mr. Reynolds also has conversations with classroom teachers and other individuals in the school district who are interested in becoming librarians. He likes to use these “interviews” as an opportunity to understand why an individual wants to become a school librarian, making sure that they are not trying to “get out of the classroom,” because he considers the work of librarians to be just as involved in instruction as any teacher. If principals contacts him directly, Mr. Reynolds may give them a list of names, but he indicated that it does not happen very often and that principals are typically dealing directly with HR.

During the “official” interviewing at the building level, Maine North School District uses hiring panels almost exclusively. Ms. Clark of HR described site-based decision-making councils that are in place in each school. If a school does not have this council, it is because it is an alternative school and has a different governance structure. Ms. Clark said that these councils are responsible for making decisions from “budget to instructional program to hiring. They make recommendations and the principal is to consult the council for any certified staffing positions.” When asked if there were any deviations from this system of decision-making and interviewing, Ms. Clark said that some occasions did call for alternative policies:

Anytime a [“recommendation to hire” form] comes in, it is signed by the council or the committee that is the branch of the council; all of their names are on it. The principal signs attesting that the site-based council has been consulted. The accountability piece is built into the recommendation, so should there ever be a question that form is what is looked at to see if the principal followed the law and the policy. In some cases, I can tell you, in the

summer, when it's particularly difficult to convene an entire council with people away on vacation, they have alternate policies that give the principal leeway to make decisions in their absence. But, again, they're still following the council policy by doing that.

Mr. Reynolds, the library supervisor, does not participate in any of these hiring panels.

Occasionally, the resource librarian, one of the professional staff working in the district-level library services office, will be asked to participate, but that is not often. His office's participation is mostly limited to the screening interviews described earlier.

Two of the three librarians interviewed in Maine North, who were recently hired, confirmed this process of using a panel for interviews. Ms. Standish said that in almost every interview she went on in Maine North, including where she was hired, there were four to five people at each of her interviews. In one school, she only interviewed with the principal and the resource coordinator. She attributed the lack of a panel to the school being on a time crunch. Ms. Johnson had a similar situation at her school, with teachers and building administrators in attendance during her interview. However, the three teachers who were on the panel were not affiliated with her school, but were teachers from other schools. She was not able to elaborate on why this was the case.

During her building-level interviews, Ms. Johnson, a librarian, stated that they were very canned and there was not much dialogue between her and the panels; it was just question-and-answer. She said, "I think for an interview to be effective, there

needs to be more, which is hard, because I have to tried to do interviews, and it's tough."

Mr. Reynolds indicated that he would also like to see some changes in the content of the interviews, but emphasized an uncertainty as to whether some principals would be able to conduct such interviews. Principals sometimes contact him for assistance in what questions they should ask during an interview, and he had the following to say about those interactions:

Principals call me to ask, "Can you send me some sample questions for me to use when I interview?" and so I had my standard list of twenty questions that they could pick ten from. Then I had this one principal and she said, "I do not want that question of 'Why did you become a librarian?'" And so I said, "Okay. You want some questions? I will give you my questions from the evaluation instrument that I have developed," and I thought were like really heavy hitters.... I put the disclaimer, these are really tough questions.... Looking at evaluation is part of a continuum that begins at hiring rather than after they have been hired and doing [professional development]. I am hearing way too much of "anybody can be a good school librarian if they get enough PD." And I don't think that's true. I think we need to back up even more and say, "well, let us help this person be successful by hiring the right people to begin with."

After the interviews are complete, Mr. Reynolds said that principals make the recommendation to hire for HR, and he is happy it works this way. He stated that he did not have anything to do with final hiring decisions and he felt that was appropriate. Once the recommendations for hire are complete, HR does the work to double-check certification requirements, make an offer to the final candidate, and finalize all paperwork to complete the hire.

In evaluating hiring practices, Mr. Reynolds said that he was considering comparing the process and standards for hiring based on an evaluation instrument the district was developing:

We are almost finished with all the documentation for the librarians' evaluation instrument here in [our state]. As I look at the exemplars in that evaluation instrument, it seems to me that if this is the end result that we want, then we should begin our screening [of job candidates] by asking questions that help identify people that will give us the end result.... What would that look like in terms of interview questions? And just for fun, which is my sadistic fun, I sat and wrote questions based upon the evaluation instrument. And they are pretty heavy-duty questions. So they probably need to be boiled down some.

As mentioned earlier, Mr. Reynolds has shared these new questions with a few principals, but only when they asked for something more rigorous than the standard questions. There was no move to put these additional interview questions into action.

Ms. Standish, a librarian, said that one factor she believes affects hiring in Maine North is whether a candidate will be a first-year teacher or already has experience. She stated that the process of hiring a first-year teacher is much more involved for a school, so they may not want to hire someone who has no experience. She said that there is more observation, coaching, and mentoring required for new faculty, and not all schools want to have to go through that. This statement was not verified or duplicated by anyone else in the school district.

4.3.3 Transfer Hires

In Maine North School District, hiring transfers from within the district was a common practice. The librarian, Ms. Standish, stated, "Most school librarians in the

district were classroom teachers first. That is what I've heard at least, from the ones I have met. They were teaching in a classroom and going to school to get their master's, so they already had their teacher certification."

Mr. Reynolds indicated a trend of recruiting internally for school librarians when there is an open position:

We still have the phenomena of principals identifying teachers that they think would be good librarians. So that with the knowledge that their librarian may be getting ready to retire or transfer or leave, to try to have one in the wings, if you will, to come in and take their place. So there is recruiting going on in the school building, but it is not being done by me.

This process of internal recruitment is encouraged by current policies in Maine North regarding who can work in the school library. Ms. Clark of HR indicated that any teacher who wants to become a librarian could do so with relative ease:

One of the little known facts, and this is one of the ways we recruit people, anyone that has an existing [teaching] certificate working in one of our schools can actually begin working as a librarian, if they have started a program to a certain point and are willing to remain in the program, they can begin teaching or working as a librarian. I think if more people knew that, we might have more people who are interested.

Schools may only hire a person in this way when there are no certified librarians available, but Ms. Clark indicated that the school district is "in that position a lot," which is contrary to some of Mr. Reynolds's statements about almost always having a ready pool of candidates for positions. Because of this predicament, Ms. Clark stated they recruit internally with different groups, including substitutes who have a preference for working in the library, substitutes who already hold library media

certification, teachers interested in obtaining certification, and library clerks who may already be in certification programs.

Two of the librarians in Maine North found out about their current positions through referrals by past administrators. Ms. Johnson was working on her degree and certification to move from the classroom to the library. When her assistant principal, someone she considers a mentor, moved to another school where a library position was available, the assistant principal recruited Ms. Johnson to join her. While recruited internally, Ms. Johnson is considered a partial transfer hire as defined in this study. She had to go through the entire application and interview process, as would an outside candidate.

Another school librarian, Ms. Bender, had a very informal interview during her transfer process. The principal asked her to stop by during the day for a discussion, which turned into an interview. By the end of the discussion, he offered her the position and she accepted. Unlike other schools in the district that would have required her to undergo a panel interview, her school is a priority school with Title I classification. Such schools in Maine North do not require panel interviews with school-based decision councils.

Ms. Bender found out about her previous position in the district through word-of-mouth, though she was changing from being a library aide to a certified librarian. Her former principal knew she was planning to move into the role of librarian from clerk and told her about the opening at the school where she currently works.

Regarding her transfer, she stated, “I don’t think that’s any different than any other business. You have to know somebody.”

Mr. Reynolds, the library supervisor, noted that the frequency of transfer hires can be a problem in his school district: “I never really know where my real vacancies are. Because someone could be transferring over to that school across the street, thereby creating a vacancy at the school that I thought was staffed.... I just have to live in that grey area...”

4.3.4 Maine North Case Summary

In Maine North School District, principals have some autonomy, but there is significant involvement at the district level in the recruiting and hiring of school librarians. However, there were a number of instances in which there was either miscommunication or disagreement between HR and the library supervisor on the needs of the school district. While the library supervisor believed there to be an ample supply of candidates for positions, HR considered there to be a shortage. HR indicated using more recruiting tactics beyond word-of-mouth, but the library supervisor did not participate in recruiting efforts. The hiring process was conducted mostly at the building level. Schools in Maine North are required to site-based decision-making councils in many aspects of their governance, according to district policy. This council is used in each school to conduct recruiting and hiring, similar to the hiring panels used in other districts. The library supervisor was rarely involved in the hiring process, though occasionally someone from his office would participate in

interviews. Overall, while much of the hiring process is conducted at the building level, there is some involvement of district level staff. Alternatively, the recruiting process is conducted almost entirely at the district level, with almost no building-level involvement.

4.4 Paris School District

Paris School District is located in the West South Central U.S. Census Division. It is a city district that incorporates a major metropolitan area. The U.S. Census categorizes it as urban in population and density. Further demographic details about the district and its students are in Figures 4.5 and 4.6.

I chose this district for participation in this study as representative of the school districts in which the library supervisor has a high number of tasks in the hiring of school librarians and there were a high number of people or groups involved overall in the recruiting and hiring processes.

The state in which Paris is located requires that each school in the state have a functional school library. The specifications for staffing vary based on the school's grade level and the number of students in the school. For instance, a middle school with 300 to 500 students must have either a full-time certified librarian or a half-time librarian and a full-time library aide. Certification requirements in the state in which Paris is located requires that a school librarian must have a Master of Library Science or an equivalent degree, such as a Master of Education in Library Media.

Figure 4.5: Paris School District Details

Population Density	City: Large
Student Population	40,000
Number of Schools	80
Teachers (FTE)	2,400
Student to Teacher Ratio	16.89
Librarians	73
District expenditures per pupil	\$9,500
FARMS	85%

Figure 4.6: Paris Student Demographics

Hispanic or Latino	10.7%
White	52.5%
Black or African American	26.7%
American Indian or Alaska Native	6.9%
Asian	1.2%
Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.1%
Some other race	5.4%
Population of two or more races	7.3%

Participants

- **Ms. Vosen** is the Director of Instructional Media and Library Services in Paris School District. She had only been in this position for a few months at the time of her interview. She has a Master of Library and Information Science and certification in school librarianship, but no other certifications. She has previous experience as an elementary classroom teacher and nearly 15 years experience as a school librarian. She has spent all of her career in Paris School District.
- **Ms. Zorn** was the previous supervisor for library services in Paris School District. She was initially contacted to be a part of this study, but had left for a position outside the school district and was not interviewed for this study. Ms. Zorn had been the library supervisor for more than 15 years and had worked for Paris School District for nearly 40 years, according to Ms. Vosen. Though I was not able to interview her, she is included in this list because of the many times she was mentioned by the participants in the study.

- **Mr. Parsons** is the Director of Certified Talent in Human Resources. He is responsible for working on the hires of certified personnel, including librarians. He has been with the school district for more than 20 years. At the time of his interview, he had been in this position for two years and was in his fifth year in Human Resources.
- **Ms. Abbott** is an elementary school librarian in Paris School District. She had been at her school for five years at the time of her interview, though she had been in the district for seven years. At her current school, she was a kindergarten teacher before transferring to the position of school librarian. She was a school librarian for two years while she earned a Master of Library and Information Science, which she had just finished before her interview.
- **Ms. Bourne** is an elementary school librarian who had just recently earned a Master of Library and Information Science and was in her first year at her school at the time of her interview. She has previous experience working in the public library.
- **Ms. Conklin** is an elementary school librarian who was in her first year at her school at the time of her interview. She has a Master of Library and Information Science, with previous experience working in an academic library and high school library in another school district.
- **Ms. Landy** is an elementary school librarian in Paris and was in her second year in her school and the district at the time of her interview. She has a

Master of Library and Information Science, but no other prior experience in libraries or education.

- There were no principals who had recently hired school librarians that were available or willing to participate in this study.

4.4.1 Recruiting

In Paris School District, Mr. Parsons in HR considers the position of school librarian to be at a critical shortage, superseded only by special education. He stated that it was a problem mirrored overall in his district by elementary positions of all varieties, for which the district makes a number of emergency hires each year. He did not give a reason for this shortage and stated that he needed to do more investigation in the area, as he is new to his position in HR. District library supervisor, Ms. Vosen, attributed the shortage in part due to salary. The state in which Paris is located has lower-than-average salaries for teachers as compared with neighboring states. According to Ms. Vosen, they “lost a lot to [neighboring states]. They’re relatively close and pay a significant amount more.” She stated that this causes their pool of applicants to shrink significantly.

While pointing to the lower salaries as a problem for the district, Ms. Vosen did indicate a one thing that draws school librarians to apply. Paris School District is in a state that does not have a large number of districts with supervisors. The supervisor, Ms. Vosen, indicated that Paris “attracts the most applicants, because [they have] structure that other districts don’t have. A lot of times [librarians in other

districts] report to their principals who report to the superintendent. They're on their own."

Paris School District has attempted to turn the generally informal process of word-of-mouth recruiting into a slightly more formal process. Mr. Parsons in HR created a recruiting program (the catchy name of which cannot be shared for confidentiality reasons), which allows building-level employees to recommend specific individuals for available positions. Current employees use the program to submit names to HR, who can then follow up with those individuals. Mr. Parsons stated that the process is particularly helpful for positions with a critical shortage, under which he believes school librarians fall.

The program includes an internally editable document for staff, which allows employees to inform HR of highly qualified individuals who might be interested in working for Paris School District. The program is not just for librarians, but all levels of staff in the district. Mr. Parsons of HR stated that current employees who provide "a certain number of leads will get a token of our appreciation.... I think the first year when we had no money to give tangible gifts, we would send a handwritten letter to the [the employee's] direct supervisor, letting that direct supervisor know that they were really contributing to the field of education, which is actually part of their evaluation."

In Paris School District, Mr. Parsons of HR made no mention of job postings on the district's website for open positions. He stated, "We have put ourselves in *Ed Week*. Anything that is educationally renowned." Mr. Conklin, a school librarian,

reiterated this fact: “The newspaper ads seemed to be more prevalent, and I think they had more big announcements about the job fairs. I want to say there was even a special classified section one time before school started that listed all the job openings.”

Another librarian, Ms. Bourne, stated that job listings online were not readily available: “My understanding, when I applied [was that] they had about five openings, but they didn’t have anything posted on the website.” She also felt that the district relied on word-of-mouth recruiting over advertising and that advertising the district did completely online was ineffective:

It seems like they’re not really interested in recruiting librarians. It seems that anytime there is an opening, they go about it telling their current librarians that they’re hiring [and asking] if they know anybody.... To me, that seems kind of silly, because there is a library school [at the state university].... They’re missing out on a pool of qualified candidates by doing this friends and family-only hiring process. Just toss it up on the website, and if everybody who applies is a dud, who cares? No big deal. You tried it.

Ms. Bourne only found out about a school library opening in Paris School District through a friend while she was in the MLS program at the state university. Many of the students in her program were teachers in Paris School District, and they were always “talking about how great their jobs were and I was like, I want to [work] there!”

Ms. Landy applied to a school library position in Paris through what she described as a slightly vague job listing. She stated it was somewhat odd, in that the posting was for a generic position as a librarian and did not list any specifications

about the school, grade level, or anything else. Until the principal at the school where she was eventually hired contacted her, she had no idea what jobs were available and for which positions she was being considered. She stated that at some point the district did start posting positions on a local university's library jobs listserv, but she did not attend that university.

Although Paris School District does have a shortage of applicants for school library positions and they do attend multidistrict job fairs, they do not attend them for school library vacancies; they only attend for other teaching positions. Mr. Parsons of HR specifically mentioned a number of other strategies, but attending job fairs was not one of them. Recruiting is newly under his jurisdiction this year, and he stated that they "basically just go to university career fairs for teachers and hope that [school library] candidates come to us."

Though it was not mentioned by HR, the recently hired librarian, Mr. Conklin, did mention attending a unidistrict job fair for Paris School District. The school district did not advertise that there were librarian positions open at the job fair, but he decided to attend anyway. He spoke with a number of schools and handed out his resume before running into the previous director of library services, Ms. Zorn. Ms. Zorn was able to give Mr. Conklin a list of schools at the job fair that had library positions open. Meeting Ms. Zorn was "lucky," as he had not known she would be there, and no one else was providing a list of openings for librarians. Mr. Conklin stated, "If I did not have [that list], it would have been me walking up and asking [each individual school] if there were openings."

In Paris School District, the library supervisor, Ms. Vosen, stated that the district had relationships with two local universities with graduate programs for school library certification. She often has conversations with the faculty at those institutions, and they keep her abreast of candidates they believe will be applying and those whose applications she might want to consider. Being new to her position, Ms. Vosen said that her predecessor, Ms. Zorn, spoke at several of the classes about what it is like to be a school librarian, “which helps develop a relationship with those candidates.”

In addition to recruiting through visits to the local universities, Ms. Vosen said that in the past there had been cohorts of teachers and other staff from Paris who were sent to get their certification from those university programs. However, she said there had been no recent cohorts created, and she did not foresee any upcoming push from the district to encourage other certified staff to become librarians.

Regarding the evaluation of recruiting processes, Mr. Parsons in HR stated that he began his position during the middle of the recruiting and hiring season and had not yet had a chance to reflect on the recruiting process; however, he indicated at the time of his interview that he thought he should be doing it. He also stated that he would like to develop more goals and metrics for HR to see if they were meeting their current goals and fulfilling the mission of the school district, but those measures were not currently in place.

4.4.2 Hiring

The online application for Paris School District is a general one. The librarian, Ms. Landy, said that there was no place to specify school, grade level, or any other preferences in one's application. Mr. Conklin said this process differed from other school districts he applied to in the area. In other districts, he was able to specifically apply to schools, an element of the application he preferred over just becoming a part of a general candidate pool. He felt that he had to spend much more time contacting principals directly in Paris, because there was no other way for him to indicate his interest in a particular school. Other than the drawback he identified, he stated that the online application process was straightforward and easy to complete.

In Paris School District, they have one of the more involved screening processes of the districts in this study. It consists of three parts: an informal screening interview, a data exercise for teachers, and a verbal example of a lesson taught over the phone. Interestingly, Mr. Parsons of HR did not mention that the screening interview is a part of the hiring process for school librarians. In speaking with others in the district, it became apparent that the screening interview was entirely informal and was done at the library supervisor's discretion. While talking about the hiring process, Ms. Vosen reiterated that she had just recently become the district library supervisor and that all of the librarians who participated in the study had been hired during Ms. Zorn's tenure as the library supervisor. The librarians Bourne, Conklin, and Landy all participated in a screening interview with Ms. Zorn. Ms. Landy said that her interview with Ms. Zorn was over the phone and was specifically tailored to

her, as she did not have a background in education before taking a position in Paris. This interview was both important and reassuring to Ms. Landy, as she had some reservations about moving into the school library. But Ms. Landy stated that Ms. Zorn had convinced her she would have the support she needed to succeed in that setting. Mr. Conklin had a similar experience. He had a friend who already worked in Paris School District, who recommended he speak with Ms. Zorn. When he called to let her know he was interested in working in the school district, they spoke at length about his work experience and his philosophy of school libraries. He stated that it was an informal conversation, but about halfway through he realized he was actually being interviewed.

Ms. Bourne and Ms. Landy both discussed the involvement of the previous library supervisor, Ms. Zorn, in informal screening interviews. Both Ms. Bourne and Ms. Landy stated their awareness of Ms. Zorn passing their names off to principals who later contacted them for interviews. Ms. Bourne said that she believed knowing and working with Ms. Zorn during the screening process is the reason she obtained a position as a school librarian. She stated that the school district wants applicants to complete everything online, “but unless you have someone who can hook you up with a principal directly, not much happens.” With HR not mentioning the supervisor-conducted screening interviews, and Ms. Bourne’s statement that most of the application process was completed online, it is unclear how informal the screening process the interviews are. Regardless, principals contact Ms. Vosen, and previously Ms. Zorn, for recommendations of individuals to interview, so the creation of a

candidate pool is at least an informal part of the hiring process. One librarian said that Ms. Zorn was integral to the process during this stage because she had “a good finger on the pulse of what librarian should go where and why.”

While the library supervisor may be conducting informal screening interviews, HR manages two official screening processes for applicants: a data writing exercise and a mock lesson plan over the phone. There was a great deal of variation on the protocol and processes of these two exercises, with some librarians completing the exercises to become a part of a candidate pool and other librarians completing them after interviewing with a principal, but just before getting an official job offer. Mr. Parsons in HR said that these exercises are specifically a part of the screening process, but they are not a “screening in, whether this is an excellent candidate. [They are] are screening out; this person may definitely not be worth [the principal’s] time.”

These application exercises are conducted by an independent contractor with the school district and are not conducted by the HR department. For the lesson plan, applicants are sent materials describing the process. They are to create a five-minute lesson plan, which they deliver to the outside contractor over the phone. Then the contractor asks the applicant numerous questions about the lesson plan. Mr. Conklin said the phone lesson was “a bizarre experience. I taught a lesson about narrowing your search.... You had to pretend like the person was doing what you were doing.... It was interesting, but really strange, and I kind of stressed about it.”

Applicants complete the data exercise electronically. Mr. Parsons of HR described the process as follows:

We have them complete a data writing exercise, during which they look at some given data on a classroom of students and are asked questions about what they would do in this situation, how does it affect their thinking.... Then there's a writing component, too, where we ask them to single out a particular student and write a letter home to their parents. We are looking at their writing skills and the personal interactions. Are they positive about the student and then bring about some concerns? Are they dismissive?

Mr. Parsons stated that this process is the same for school librarians as it is for teachers, because "we consider [librarians] teachers."

The school-based interviews conducted with candidates for library positions varied throughout the district. As the current supervisor, Ms. Vosen is sometimes involved in those interviews, though she said that some principals choose not to invite her to participate. In the interviews in which she was involved, she was always asked to be an active participant. She described the difference between the questions principals had for candidates and the questions they wanted her to ask:

[They ask,] "How many books do you think it's appropriate to check out for this grade? Is that normal? At this school, we check out three books." They wanted me to ask questions that were a little harder to see as principals. How [candidates] handled their budget, how they worked with teachers. "What do you do if you have a teacher that doesn't want to work with you? What are your strategies?" A lot of time principals didn't know to ask those questions. They only knew the things that they saw. A lot of times the questions from the principal were, "What sort of activities do you do with the kids to promote reading?" "How do you do your story times?" Mine were more specific to the library.

Mr. Conklin said that he appreciated being interviewed by hiring panels for schools in Paris. In particular, he liked being able to have conversations with potential co-workers and getting more than just a top-down view from administrators of what

the culture is like in a school. In two of the three interviews he had in Paris, the previous supervisor, Ms. Zorn, was on the hiring panel. In one of those interviews, both Ms. Zorn and Ms. Vosen were on the panel, as Ms. Vosen was the individual leaving as the school librarian to move into the district supervisor position. He said that most of the questions were related to his philosophy of how a school library program should be. Rather than focusing on logistics or metrics, he spent most of his interview talking about what the library should look and feel like to a student, how he would work with other teachers in the school, and how the library would be an open and inviting place for all students in the school.

When Ms. Landy was interviewed for her position, it was only with the principal. The principal mentioned that he wanted to have the exiting librarian there, but she was not able to attend. To substitute for this, he had the previous librarian send Ms. Landy a list of questions for her to answer in written format, which both the former librarian and the principal then reviewed. She said that the questions were most focused on teaching and only a few questions dealt with the school library. She realized that some of the questions were specifically tailored to her experience, as she did not have any prior education experience. She was given a tour of the library during her interview, but was not given much time with the collection.

Ms. Bourne, a librarian, had the previous library supervisor, Ms. Zorn, in her interview. She said that Ms. Zorn spent a lot of time explaining things to Ms. Bourne's future principal during her interview: "She mostly was answering questions about the library stuff for me, since the principal is kind of removed from that." In

keeping with what Mr. Parsons of HR stated about how the school district's needs affect the hiring process, Ms. Bourne stated that her future principal also spent a lot of time explaining the school's Title I categorization, the needs of an impoverished community, and working with students with low socioeconomic status.

As with most other school districts, decision of selection for a position in Paris is based at the school level, according to Mr. Parsons. He said that HR is only involved if requested, usually just for clarification or support and never actually assisting in making a decision. As with her involvement in interviews, Ms. Vosen said she is sometimes there to consult with principals as they make their final selection: "A lot of times, after the applicants left, [the principal and I] would discuss the interview. They would make their decision right there and I would know right away." Although she sometimes participated discussion about the candidates, the principal made the final decision.

Mr. Parsons and Ms. Vosen's statements were confirmed by the recently hired librarians interviewed for this study. Ms. Abbott and Ms. Bourne both stated that the principal was the only one involved in the process and was the one to make the final decision, as far as they understood. When Mr. Conklin was hired, he said he was given a tour of the library by two teachers, while Ms. Vosen and his principal discussed his interview. When they were done discussing, they joined him in the library and he was offered the position on the spot.

The finalization of a job offer can be somewhat complicated in the Paris School District. They have a number of school librarians who are working on a

provisional status. In the words of Mr. Parsons, “We’ve had a difficult time finding the number of high-quality candidates of [school librarians] that we need, so in some cases we have had to petition the state to do some waivers while folks are actually going through their program.” These individuals are typically hired only if there are no qualified individuals applying. Being hired provisionally requires both HR and the library supervisor to submit paperwork to the school board, who must then make a request to the state Department of Education for a waiver for provisional employment. Waivers can be renewed, and it is important to keep track of them, because those seeking their degree must finish in a certain amount of time and HR must provide that information to the state during times of accreditation. At the time of the interviews for this study, Paris School District had approximately eight individuals working as school librarians who were employed under a waiver. Ms. Bourne is one of them. She found the process particularly frustrating because she already had more than one teaching certificate; however, she still needs certification as a school librarian, so she had to go through the additional schooling while on a provisional waiver. Ms. Bourne said that most of the assistance she received in making sure the waiver went through came from Ms. Vosen, the library supervisor, and not HR.

Regarding the hiring process, Mr. Parsons said that they are always in the process of evaluating their practices. His current concern is the amount of time it takes for applicants to go from submitting their applications, through the process of completing the data exercise and mock lesson plan phone call, and then invited to a school for an interview. The librarian, Ms. Bourne, indicated that this process had

been incredibly slow when she was applying to Paris. HR surveyed those applying for positions, looked at the numbers, and found that the process was taking far too long.

Ms. Vosen said that HR has also approached her to change the data exercise librarians do as a part of the screening process. As Mr. Conklin noted, the data exercise seemed a little strange because it was geared toward teachers and not librarians. Ms. Vosen stated that HR came to her saying, “We’ve had a couple of comments on [the data exercise]. We would like to work with you to develop something different for librarians.”

Ms. Vosen said she would also like to change the lesson taught over the phone for librarians, and hopes that working with HR on the data exercise will allow her to make that change: “Instead of having the phone lesson plan, maybe [applicants] come in and sit down with me, instead, and I give [HR] the go ahead or say no.”

4.4.3 Transfer Hires

When discussing recruitment, Ms. Vosen mentioned that internal recruitment supported by building-level staff is important in keeping a current pool of candidates for librarian positions. “We do actively seek teachers. The librarians are all aware of what would make a good librarian, so oftentimes they’ll come to us and say, ‘I’ve got this teacher who would really be great. Would you talk to them?’” She stated that beyond such casual conversations, there is, presently, no real push for teachers to become librarians.

Ms. Abbott was a classroom teacher in Paris before becoming a school librarian there. She and numerous other school librarians in the district have been hired through such internal recruitment:

The way that I'm understanding it, the majority of the pool of librarians that PSD picks from are former classroom teachers of PSD.... They don't do a lot of hiring outside of the school district, only because there are usually qualified people within the district that they can choose from.... At any given time, there are usually several people in the district who are working on becoming a school librarian that [Paris has] to pull from.

Ms. Abbott could only recall three or four of the hires in recent years being from outside the school district. In Ms. Abbott's case, she was recruited to librarianship through the help of a colleague. She was interested in becoming a librarian because of the encouragement of Ms. Kramer, the librarian at her school, a good friend of hers. Ms. Kramer found out from the district library services office that scholarships were being offered to two Paris School District employees to attend the state university to receive their MLS with school library certification and informed Ms. Abbott. Ms. Abbott was a recipient of that scholarship and, while she was in graduate school, Ms. Kramer transferred to another school district. Ms. Kramer had spoken with the principal about Ms. Abbott before switching districts, recommended Ms. Abbot for hire while she was still getting her MLS, and the principal offered Ms. Abbott the position as soon as Ms. Kramer announced her resignation.

In Paris School District, the process Ms. Abbott went through was only slightly different because she was being transferred as a provisional employee; she had not yet completed her certification in school librarianship. She said that HR and

the library services office handled all of the paperwork necessary for both her transfer and provisional employment, which requires that certain documents are approved by the Board of Education and then are sent to the state education agency. Nothing was completed at the building level by her principal. She said this all went seamlessly, though, and the hardest part was moving the materials from her classroom to the library.

4.4.4 Paris Case Summary

In the Paris School District, there was both formal and informal involvement of the library supervisor in the recruiting and hiring of school librarians. Paris has a shortage of candidates for library positions and HR outlined a number of specific tactics used to address this shortage, including the formalization of a word-of-mouth, or referral, recruiting program. Despite the shortage of candidates, neither the library supervisor nor HR spoke about collaborative opportunities for recruiting between their two offices. The hiring process is conducted mostly at the building level, but the library supervisor indicated that she had a number of opportunities to serve on hiring panels and advise principals throughout the hiring process. Whether principals involve the library supervisor in hiring is a choice left up to them. There is no requirement for them to involve anyone at the district level when hiring a librarian. Transfer hires were common in the district, with many of the librarians having been former classroom teachers, some of whom were hired provisionally before completing their LIS programs. Overall, the district had a mix of decision-making and

involvement between the building and district levels throughout the recruiting and hiring processes.

4.5 Red Rock School District

Red Rock School District is located in the South Atlantic U.S. Census Division (in a different state than Cotesworth School District). It is a county district that incorporates city and rural areas. The U.S. Census categorizes it as midsize suburban in population and density. Further demographic details about the district and its students are in Figures 4.7 and 4.8.

I chose this district for participation in this study from the group of school districts in which the library supervisor completed a high number of tasks in the hiring of school librarians and there were a low number of people or groups involved overall in the recruiting and hiring processes.

The state in which Red Rock is located requires that each school in the state have a functional school library. Each school must have a regularly available, certified school librarian. Certification requires a Master of Library Science or Instructional Technology from an institution that meets the state standards for certification programs.

Figure 4.7: Red Rock School District Details

Population Density	Suburban: Midsize
Student Population	38,000
Number of Schools	54
Teachers (FTE)	2,800
Student to Teacher Ratio	13.46
Librarians	64
District expenditures per pupil	\$14,200
FARMS	31%

Figure 4.8: Red Rock Student Demographics

Hispanic or Latino	2.6%
White	83.1%
Black or African American	11.3%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.2%
Asian	1.6%
Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.1%
Some other race	0.9%
Population of two or more races	2.8%

Participants

- **Ms. Dodgson** is a principal at an elementary school. She had been the principal at her school for seven years and worked in the school district for more than 20 years at the time of her interview. She has previous experience as an assistant principal, teacher specialist, and a classroom teacher. She has her teaching certificate and a Master in Supervision Administration.
- **Ms. Grant** is a Human Resources Staffing Specialist in Red Rock. She had been in her position for two years at the time of her interview, after receiving a Master of Human Resources. She has worked in the district for 10 years, serving eight of those years as an elementary classroom teacher.
- **Mr. Hammond** is the principal at a joined middle and high school where there is a school librarian for each set of grade levels. He was new to his position at the school at the time of his interview, but had previously served as a principal in another school district.

- **Ms. Malcolm** was in her first year as a full-time school librarian in her middle school at the time of her interview. She had previously served as a part-time librarian in the same school for three years and in three other schools, all in Red Rock School District. She has a Master of Library Science and previous experience as an elementary classroom teacher. Most of her teaching experience is in Red Rock School District, though she had worked in other districts before she became a school librarian.
- **Ms. Murphy** is the Supervisor of Library Services for Red Rock School District. At the time of her interview, she had been in her position for eight years. She has previous experience as a classroom teacher and a school librarian. She has a Master of Library Science and a Certificate of Administration. Though she has other work experience, all of her educational experience has been in Red Rock.
- **Ms. Nedry** was in her second year as a high school librarian in her school, but her fourth year as a librarian in Red Rock School District. She had previous experience as a classroom teacher in Red Rock before becoming a librarian. At the time of her interview, she was still in the graduate program getting her Master of Library Science, but her concentration was not in school libraries, but rather e-government. Once she completes her degree, she does not intend to stay in education.
- **Ms. Sattler** is an elementary school librarian. She was in her second year at her school as the librarian and, before moving to the library position, was an

elementary teacher for ten years in the same school. She has a second master's degree in instructional technology; her first master's degree was in early childhood education. As an educator, she has only worked in Red Rock School District.

4.5.1 Recruiting

Red Rock School District has a low appeal for potential applicants, based primarily on a competitive compensation problem with nearby districts. When asked to speculate on why Red Rock School District had a shortage of applicants and why there were school library positions open at the beginning of the school year, low salaries was the first reason cited by nearly all individuals in Red Rock. Participants said that salaries in the district are far too low; employees have not received a raise in over five years. According to the library supervisor, Ms. Murphy, they are in the top 20 percent of school districts in student family income and the bottom 20 percent in teacher pay. Ms. Nedry, a librarian, stated, "When I tell [other people] I work for Red Rock School District, you can just see this look on their face."

In Red Rock School District, the posting of ads and the screening process is more rigid; word-of-mouth recruiting is not a common practice. Ms. Grant from HR said that occasionally a principal will identify a candidate for a position of which HR was not aware, having found a person on their own through word-of-mouth and other techniques. However, this is not common and happens only five or so times each hiring season. Ms. Grant said that, typically, such hiring practices happen in the

elementary school and usually because an individual was a substitute teacher or a field study student. Ms. Grant did not specifically mention this happening for school library positions. No other individual in Red Rock School District mentioned word-of-mouth as a recruiting tactic.

Ms. Grant noted that the process of posting jobs for recruitment was in transition. They have an application system that they use locally, which includes job postings online. This system feeds directly into another, which offers educational job postings nationwide. Beyond those regular resources, she had begun trying new tactics:

Beside posting it to our website, I'm just getting into posting into the actual universities. Yesterday, I was able to post to [one local university]. Part of it is because the person who used to do [job postings] is no longer in this department; it is discovering where she had accounts and what she did.

The district library supervisor, Ms. Murphy, stated that she serves in an advisory role in this stage of recruitment. After saying this, though, her statement did not indicate any real involvement in the process of posting job ads. She plays an “advisory role” in the recruiting process, but then clearly stated that she “doesn’t get into the specifics.”

Ms. Grant also had much to say about using multidistrict job fairs for recruiting. She gave a detailed account of the job fairs HR attends. While taking over this responsibility of recruiting from someone else, there already existed a list of criteria for job fairs (e.g., candidate availability, degree-granting specialties, job fair attendance) and the results of HR’s attendance at a job fair (e.g., feedback, number of

persons interviewed and/or hired). According to Ms. Grant, they attend a number of multidistrict job fairs. One fair includes districts recruiting from the entire state, while other job fairs are at different universities. In attending those job fairs, Ms. Grant noted that other school districts are sometimes able to conduct interviews and offer job contracts at the job fair, which she regrets that Red Rock is not able to do. She indicated that this has to do with how the budget is approved by the local government and then the school board, noting that such things were never complete at the time that multidistrict job fairs are held, which leaves HR unable to offer contracts at such a time.

Ms. Grant specifically mentioned that she had not been to any job fairs with Ms. Murphy, the library supervisor. Ms. Grant attributed this to the fact that she was relatively new to her position in HR. However, she also noted that there is a job fair at a nearby state university with a library degree-granting program. Ms. Murphy had told her the district does not attend that job fair, though Ms. Grant did not know why. Ms. Grant mentioned, “If I could take Ms. Murphy with me, that would be beneficial,” because they could do both pre-screening interviews for school library candidates at the same time (more will be discussed on the pre-screening process in the section on “Hiring”). Additionally, Ms. Grant stated that they are trying to expand their efforts to participate in job fairs because of the number of library positions that remained open after the school year had begun. She mentioned both making more direct contact with universities that offer programs for school librarians and attending large job fairs in neighboring states as future tactics she would like to do for recruiting. Ms. Murphy,

the library supervisor, confirmed that HR was heavily involved in attending job fairs to recruit candidates and that she had attended in the past, but no longer found it worth the amount of time necessary to attend:

The events I've been to did not have library as their [focus].... If there are other colleges that [recruiters] are going to and they know there is a library program, I would be more than happy to go but I don't know what their schedule is and why they go to which colleges, so I don't really know how it hits their radar. If it is a college that has that program, I would love to go.

Ms. Grant in HR said that pre-service visits to the nearby institutions granting school library certification have not been a part of their recruiting tactics in previous years. Ms. Grant said that she would like to change this, but she did not specifically mention coordinating this effort with Ms. Murphy. Ms. Murphy did not mention visiting pre-service students as a part of recruiting. A failure to make a connection with nearby institutions was specifically a complaint of one librarian, Ms. Malcolm:

They don't come down to [the state university]. They don't seem to make an effort to reach out at places where I know people are looking for jobs. When I was in graduate school, we had supervisors from several counties come to our classes, and we had a panel where they answered our questions. I don't think Ms. Murphy ever did that or has done that. That made me want to apply to those counties that were there, because I felt I would know what I would be getting. That would have been helpful.

In addition to more visits with students in pre-service programs, Ms. Grant said that they would like to do something with one of the local universities to send a cohort of teachers to a school library program, but they are only in the initial stages of that process. The library supervisor, Ms. Murphy, made no mention of creating such a cohort. Ms. Nedry, a recently hired librarian in the district who was formerly a

classroom teacher, said she started out thinking she was going to be in a cohort sponsored by Red Rock when she began her certification program years ago. She said the district told a group of interested individuals that classes would be held just for them in the school district, so they would not have to commute to the university. However, she said, “[Red Rock and the university] did not keep their promise and no cohort was ever established.” She proceeded with the program and was the only attendee from Red Rock. She mentioned being particularly disappointed because a neighboring school district had successfully created a cohort for the program, and she felt like an outsider throughout her coursework.

In evaluating the recruiting process, Ms. Grant seems to have some metrics in place. As mentioned, HR attends a number of multidistrict job fairs at local universities. She said that they try to look each year at how valuable attending those job fairs is, including specifically looking at the job fairs’ attendance rates, feedback from recruiters and participants, the number of potential candidates interviewed at a job fair, how many put in a final application, how many of those were interviewed, and how many of those were hired. She identified all this as data important to the process of evaluating recruiting.

Ms. Murphy said she typically gets together with HR once a year to establish the recruiting efforts and see what needs to be done in the hiring season. She also said she felt HR was understaffed. When asked how she would like to change things, she stated:

I'd like to be in charge of everything and just hire who I want when I want, but that isn't happening. I can't think of how to change getting more recruits. I really don't. This is something we don't have control over and I don't know if it is actually a national thing or if is just in [our state]. It just seems that there are not a lot of people out there and I'm not sure what's happening.

4.5.2 Hiring

As in other districts, the hiring process in Red Rock begins with an individual submitting an online application. The application is a part of a software system HR uses to track applicants and applications throughout the entire hiring process. The online application requires the submission of several documents, including certification, references, test scores, and transcripts. The library supervisor, Ms. Murphy, also has access to this application system. She was the only supervisor to indicate such easy access to the applications. She stated that whenever she sees something is missing or requires more information, she could easily contact HR to get in touch with that individual.

While in other districts the screening of applicants was left mostly to HR, if it was completed at all, in Red Rock the library supervisor is very involved in the process. The supervisor, Ms. Murphy, indicated that she participates in reviewing applications as soon as they are complete. No other supervisor indicated that level of involvement during the screening stage of the hiring process.

While screening applications, Ms. Murphy mentioned that she pays close attention to how applicants view their future library position, particularly those applicants who come from other states. Ms. Murphy finds that some applicants from

other states do not see the school library as a place where instruction occurs, but a repository where books stored and sometimes circulated. She wanted them to understand that in the school library they will be teaching the majority of the time and not just checking out books and running reading programs.

Red Rock School District also has provisional employment for school librarians. It is not something HR likes to do, but the library supervisor, Ms. Murphy, had to push for that consideration, as they are experiencing a critical shortage and had multiple openings for school librarians even as the school year began: “If [applicants] weren’t all certified, [HR] didn’t want to see them and I said.... But we don’t have anybody.” If HR is to offer provisional employment to a candidate, it must get a letter from the candidate’s university ensuring that they are currently enrolled in the program and that they are no more than six credits away from completing their certification. In the case of new hires, Ms. Murphy stated that provisional employment is not offered to individuals when there are certified people in the same applicant pool.

Red Rock has a formal process for conducting screening interviews with applicants. Ms. Grant said, “Anytime an applicant applies to Red Rock, school principals are not allowed to see [the applications] right away. They’re screened through us first.” Once applications are in the district’s system, they are reviewed by both Ms. Grant and Ms. Murphy. Ms. Grant said that this is typical of any position for which there is a certain area of expertise. Teachers applying for positions in music or special education in Red Rock also have to go through a screening interview with

both HR and a content supervisor at the same level as Ms. Murphy. While she has sometimes conducted these interviews in tandem with other content supervisors, Ms. Grant said that she has never conducted a joint screening interview with Ms. Murphy. Once an application is complete, Ms. Grant typically coordinates with Ms. Murphy to make sure both the HR and school library interviews are conducted on the same day.

When HR screens candidates, they use the same interview questions for all teachers, from high school math teachers to elementary teachers. Ms. Grant noted, however, that Ms. Murphy has provided HR with a different set of questions specific to librarians, which should be used for the HR screening interview. The only other screening interviews with different screening questions are speech language pathologists, physical therapists, and guidance counselors.

A candidate pool is created after screening interviews are complete. Both HR and the Office of Library Services have to approve of an applicant before they are sent out as candidates to schools as a possible hire. Mr. Dodgson, a principal in Red Rock, had the following to say about the process:

The supervisor of library sciences, when they know we have a vacancy, she's the one who goes through and identifies candidates for the school to interview and she sends the names to us. We interview and either select a candidate or ask for more names. She's kind of the buffer between us having to go into a database and look, look, look. She interviews them, screens them, so she's interviewing her top candidates to send out to schools.

When asked about whether she suggests candidates for certain schools, Ms. Murphy made less of a point about making recommendations to principals and instead focused on making sure positions were filled. She said that she always makes an effort to fill

schools with a full-time vacancy first. She then works on filling part-time and roaming positions that work at more than one school.

With a candidate pool created, the next step in the hiring process is the building-level interview. Ms. Murphy does sometimes participate in candidate interviews after her screening interview, if the principal requests it. However, participation does not happen very often. She is okay with not participating in the site-based interviews because she has already talked with the candidates, has a good idea of what their abilities are, and has approved sending them out to interview with principals.

Principal Dodgson stated that she conducts all interviews with her assistant principal. This was the case for her most recent hire of a school librarian. Another principal, Mr. Hammond, conducts all interviews, including those for school librarians, on his own. He sometimes seeks a list of candidates from content supervisors such as Ms. Murphy, but this is the only assistance he requests in the interview process. One librarian in the district, Ms. Sattler, said that she appreciated the one-on-one interview she had with her principal when she was hired, as it was less intimidating than a panel interview and seemed more personal.

While Ms. Murphy, the library supervisor, is happy to let principals conduct interviews on their own since she has screened candidates, she did talk about assisting with the content of the interview:

I generated my own list for library interview questions with the answers. That way if principals interview, they know what I'm looking for. When we do interview someone, [principals] get the questions. They can choose to use

them or not; usually they do just so they know. At least I know they've gone through me first so it's okay if they don't use my questions.

Principal Dodgson said that she used the questions sent by Ms. Murphy in the last interviews she conducted for a school librarian. Another principal, Mr. Hammond, noted that in the interviews he conducts, there is some variation to the interview as compared with teachers. He said that all interviews begin with pedagogical questions, and this is no different for the librarian candidates, who must express how they see their role in the school. Beyond the standard interview, he also chooses to focus on how the candidate will build relationships with parents and colleagues in the school's community.

While the building-level interviews are typically done with just principals at their school, Ms. Murphy did note an exception. She said that one year, they had so many library openings they brought in all of the principals to conduct interviews at once: "We did like a rodeo and all the principals came and I was there at one time...poor candidates. Then they sat and we interviewed [each candidate] as a group and then we all talked to decide who would get whom." Ms. Murphy organized the group interview and was a part of the panels. She asked the majority of the questions during the rodeo interviews. Once she was done with a standard set of questions, principals were given time to ask any specific questions to each candidate.

Ms. Malcolm was one of the librarians who attended this "rodeo interview" and corroborated Ms. Murphy's account. Ms. Malcolm stated that it was a group interview with a panel made up entirely of principals. When she was asked to come in

for an interview, she was not aware the position she was applying for would be working at more than one school; she was just told to come in to interview for a library position. There were six principals in attendance and she interviewed with three groups of them, each group made up by the set of schools at which she would potentially work. Ms. Malcolm said the experience was very stressful and that not having any warning of the situation beforehand caused her a great deal of anxiety.

The final hiring decisions and selection of a candidate in Red Rock School District did not always occur at the building level. For instance, Ms. Grant in HR stated that the superintendent is sometimes involved in selection:

If it comes to a hiring decision where I may not like a candidate, the [library supervisor] may not like a candidate, the principal likes the candidate, and they're pushing for the person, we will take it to the superintendent and let her make the decision. She's real hands-on. Also, [we are] a real close-knit, hands-on [school district].

While not typically involved in building-level interviews, Ms. Murphy said that principals have consulted her on selection of a candidate. She said there are occasions where a principal will contact her about candidates, not just about who to interview, but also for her opinion on the final hire. They are able to do this because she screens every single person in the candidate pool; principals know she is knowledgeable about the candidates and can give her an opinion on each of them, having talked to them herself. When asked why some principals call to consult her and some do not, she said:

I think it is a personality thing. Principals are used to leading so they are the ones that make most of the decisions at their building anyway. I always take it

as a kudos if they call me, as opposed to not calling me being a bad thing, because they are used to making all of those decisions every day.

Despite this level of involvement, Ms. Murphy was also the supervisor who stated, “I’d like to be in charge of everything and just hire who I want when I want, but that isn’t happening.”

In evaluating the hiring process, Ms. Murphy said that the process has changed, but she did not indicate there was any current work to evaluate or change the process currently or in the future. In particular, she worked with HR in the past to change the job description included in ads for school librarians. Ms. Malcolm, who went through the “rodeo interview” with multiple principals, said that she would like to see the district do away with tactics like that, but Ms. Murphy indicated the rodeo interview was an unusual circumstance and was not likely to be repeated unless the district had a large number of vacancies again.

4.5.3 Transfers Hires

In Red Rock School District, where staffing currently is a problem and at the beginning of the school year there were at least five open library positions in the district, Ms. Grant of HR noted that recruiting internally is something she would like to do more of, and something she does not think the district does well: “I would like to, if possible...have a compiled list of employees who are seeking library media certification, [so] when we have a huge shortage, they would let me put those teachers in those areas...” Ms. Grant has used the employee newsletter to ask those seeking school library certification to contact her and keep her updated on their progress. She

is able to use the certification department to see who currently has certification in library services, but they are unable to tell her who is seeking certification. Ms. Grant stated: “I did get a list of those offers, to see where they are, so we can track those employees. So before they are ready to go, before we lose them to another county, we can get our own employees on board with us.”

Ms. Sattler’s principal hired her through internal recruitment. Ms. Sattler was a classroom teacher working on her MLS when the librarian in her school retired mid-year. Her principal called her in, knowing she was working on her library certification, and informed her that he would like her to take the position. There was some question of when she would start, because the former librarian left in the middle of the school year, but Ms. Sattler always knew that the position was reserved for her. “I guess I knew...it was going to be a definite, but I didn’t sign anything to make it official. But the principal told me from that first conversation that I was definitely his first choice.” The reason the principal considered moving her mid-year was because, in Ms. Sattler’s words, “Human Resources can put somebody in and go above the principal, and he didn’t want that to happen and me miss out on the position.”

Ms. Nedry, a librarian, was vocal about wanting to transfer to the school library, but there was not a position at her school, her principal did not want her to transfer, and the library services office was at first unwilling to work with her until she had obtained certification. However, when the principal was forced to make cuts in staffing, the principal was much more willing to let Ms. Nedry go and worked with library services to help Ms. Nedry get the transfer she wanted.

For other districts, there was very little, if any, involvement of district-level offices in the transfer process. In Red Rock, HR and the library supervisor had some involvement in the transfer process. As stated earlier, Ms. Sattler, a librarian, said that when there was a librarian position open at her school, her principal felt rushed to fill it, in fear that HR would step in and fill the position for him. In no other district did anyone talk of such intervention by HR.

It is not just HR that is involved from the district level in Red Rock. The supervisor, Ms. Murphy, also takes part in placing people for transfers. Principal Hammond described a situation in which he was not a part of the transfer process at all, but his school librarian was placed solely by Ms. Murphy:

This is only my second year [at this school]. The [school librarian] was placed by the supervisor. Long story, but the previous [school librarian] resigned because she moved out of state. My predecessor cut the position. Realizing we needed two, the supervisor placed [a temporary, part-time librarian at another school] permanently here for a full time position. That wasn't something that was done at the site, it was done at the district level.... I was told what was happening. It was really the only way to get a second librarian here, since my predecessor had cut the position. Ms. Murphy had this person who was available, and she told me I'd like her. I do, she's great. But it was kind of like, you take this person or you don't have a [librarian].... Normally, principals have full opportunities to take a voluntary transfer, so librarians from other schools have an opportunity to transfer here. Or if I wanted to go to open market or find a new hire, I could do that too. This is just a screwy situation.

While Mr. Hammond made the situation seem completely abnormal, such interventions have happened before in Red Rock. Ms. Nedry, a librarian, is in her second library position in the school district. For her first transfer, she was trying to move to a library position from a teaching position in Red Rock. She had informed

Ms. Murphy of her plans and had been persistent in following up on any available positions. She related the story this way:

My supervisor of library media, she came into my then-school. She came in and said, “Here’s the deal. I have four schools. I’m going to be here for fifteen minutes. I need to know in fifteen minutes what school you want to go to, if you want to be a media specialist.” Pressure! I used my knowledge of what I [already knew], because I couldn’t just jump on a computer and do research. I wanted to. In my head, I kind of had an idea of the area and the populations...so I basically made a snap decision on my own thoughts and feelings about the place.

Another librarian in the district stated that such transfers are not abnormal in Red Rock, and she attributed most of it to the supervisor’s tactics:

It really seems like a matter of favorites.... There’s an example of a woman who left [Red Rock] to go to [another district]. She wasn’t getting what she was told she would get at her interview there, so she came back to Red Rock and Ms. Murphy immediately gave her job as an itinerant [a floating librarian that may be placed at more than one school], which seems fair enough to me. But between her first and second year, she was moved back to her regular position at a really sought after job, which really feels like favoritism to me.

4.5.4 Red Rock Case Summary

In Red Rock School District, there was a great deal of involvement of the district-level offices in the recruiting and hiring of school librarians. HR is heavily involved in recruiting in numerous different ways, often enlisting the support and participation of the library supervisor. There seems to be a break in communication about what the district is currently doing in recruiting and ways in which HR believes the district and the library supervisor could do more. In the hiring process, the library supervisor and HR are both very involved, with each one conducting screening

interviews of candidates before principals can select them for interviews.

Additionally, both HR and the library supervisor are involved in transfer hires, as well. In some instances, it is the library supervisor shifting people from one school to another, rather than relying on the efforts of employees. Overall, the district level offices are very involved in the recruiting and hiring processes in these districts.

4.6 Sunville School District

Sunville School District is located in the Mountain U.S. Census Division. It is a city district that incorporates a metropolitan area. The U.S. Census categorizes it as large urban in population and density. Further demographic details about the district and its students are in Figures 4.9 and 4.10.

I chose this district for participation in this study as the control site. In this district, the library supervisor indicated no regular responsibilities in the hiring process and there are an unknown number of people involved in the hiring process.

The state in which Sunville is located requires that each school in the state to have a functional school library. The requirements for being a school librarian include either having a Master of Library Science or having a teaching certificate and passing an exam to earn an endorsement for library media. There is no graduate level school library preparation program that is local to Sunville, either in the area or in the state. The only option for a local individual to earn certification through a degree would be to attend an online program.

Figure 4.9: Sunville School District Details

Population Density	City: Large, Urban
Student Population	93,000
Number of Schools	163
Teachers (FTE)	6,200
Student to Teacher Ratio	15.07
Librarians	90
District expenditures per pupil	\$10,427
FARMS	62%

Figure 4.10: Sunville Student Demographics

Hispanic or Latino	52.8%
White	62.1%
Black or African American	3.3%
American Indian or Alaska Native	5.1%
Asian	1.8%
Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.1%
Some other race	20.7%
Population of two or more races	6.9%

Participants

- **Ms. Capa** is a Staffing Consultant in Human Resources who specifically works with elementary schools. She has over 10 years of experience in her current position and has experience as an elementary classroom teacher. She has a Master of Education and an Administrative Certificate. She has spent her entire career in Sunville.
- **Ms. Searle** is the Library Services and Instructional Materials Manager. She came to the district to work in technical services and now runs that department, which includes her work in library services, among other responsibilities. She has previous experience as a reference and technical services librarian at the post-secondary level.
- **Mr. Cassie** is a high school principal, who has been in his current position for three years and has been in the Sunville School District for 14 years. He is working toward his PhD in Educational Leadership. He was previously an assistant principal and classroom teacher.

- **Ms. Corazon** is a first-year school librarian at two elementary schools. She has been at her school for nine years, but had previously worked as a classroom teacher. She has a Master of Early Education with TESOL and library media endorsements, and is a National Board Certified teacher in elementary education.
- **Ms. Kaneda** is a school librarian at two elementary schools, who at the time of her interview had been with the district for five years as a teacher and had just started the academic year as a librarian working part-time in two schools. She has previous experience as a public and academic librarian. She has a Master of Library Science with a school library media endorsement.

4.6.1 Recruiting

The library supervisor, Ms. Searle, said that in Sunville, recruiting is not very heavy because of a lack of available positions. Both librarians interviewed, Ms. Corazon and Ms. Kaneda, attributed this lack of available positions to school librarians having very low turnover in their district, with many individuals staying in their positions until retirement.

Principal Cassie found recruiting unnecessary the last time he had an opening for a school librarian, stating he had a large number of applicants. He attributed this in part to the high appeal of his school: the building is new and has a “breathtaking, very well furnished and equipped library, both from a technology standpoint and book resources.” Coupled with the administration providing funding for both a

librarian and a library aide at the school, this makes it a particularly appealing site, so recruiting is not as needed.

The supervisor, Ms. Searle, described the recruiting process as being very informal, and a process in which she is not very involved. She indicated that word-of-mouth tactics happen occasionally. In her advisory capacity, she is only able to pass on information about available candidates if a principal specifically asks for it, and she is not always aware of available positions.

Though Ms. Searle was only sometimes involved in word-of-mouth recruiting, the librarians in Sunville indicated heavy importance on getting information from informal sources, as opposed to official ones. For Ms. Kaneda, it was of particular importance because she serves more than one school. She received her first part-time position by applying online. To be full time in the district, however, she needed to find another complementary part-time position at another school—she and her principal had to work together to find that position. She said, “It’s a lot of being in the right place in the right time, the people you know, and a lot of time if you’re in the system, that’s your best bet for getting a job.”

Ms. Corazon made a similar statement about the recruiting process, indicating that print and online sources of information about jobs in the district are not always reliable, because of what a principal may already have in mind for a position. She said the process of transferring from the classroom to the school library was simple for her, but she knows that it is not for other individuals. She had the luxury of waiting for what she considered a desirable position as a librarian to become available

while she continued to work as a classroom teacher. She waited for three years until her current position was open and acknowledged that many applicants do not have that option.

At Principal Cassie's school, someone else at his school referred his current librarian to him. He stated that the previous librarian was well regarded, and so it was known by many when she decided to leave. One individual in the school referred the current librarian as a candidate, and she went through the entire process with other candidates, "coming out on top."

Though others in Sunville focused on word-of-mouth recruiting, Ms. Capa of HR outlined a specific process and placement for recruiting through job postings on the district's website:

[Principals] fill out a request to advertise..., we verify the vacancy is truly there, we send it up to budget for approval, it comes back down.... We have our website, and it has all positions posted. Librarians are by themselves. They're not lumped in with elementary teachers or high schools.

When asked for clarification on whether job postings were open or specific, she stated the applicants apply for positions at specific schools and that each posting is separate. However, they have some difficulty with actually getting principals to follow this procedure:

If it's just a transfer within the school, [principals] don't always have to advertise, because they're going to create a vacancy. You're going from third grade to fourth grade, well, it's still going to create a vacancy and that position will get posted. When it comes to a librarian position, it's not the same as teacher to teacher. We would ask the principal to advertise. What may happen sometimes is one of the principal's teachers is wanting to do the library position, but they still have to go through the process and advertise it. Of

course, you can't stop—people get people, you know, they want them, but they didn't advertise, it's still part of the process. But what if that person doesn't even qualify?

In addition to word-of-mouth, the librarian, Ms. Corazon, tried using these individual job postings to find another part-time position within the school district to bring her to full-time status. However, she stated that the postings could be frustrating, for the very reason that HR requires principals to post them:

We have a website that posts any openings that are happening. During the summertime, I was diligently sending out resumes and cover letters to the different principals.... Sometimes they have a teacher or somebody that they are planning to hire, but they still have to put that up on the website, so that is kind of frustrating, because it's on the website, but they already have someone in mind.

While Ms. Capa of HR talked at length about job postings in Sunville, there was almost no mention of anyone attending job fairs. Ms. Capa said she has been on recruiting trips, but only to assist the main recruiter, as recruiting is not the focus of her position in HR. In her attendance at job fairs with the recruiter, the focus was on special education, and school librarians were never targeted. The library supervisor, Ms. Searle, did not mention being involved in job fairs in any way. Principal Cassie stated that there is a unidistrict job fair offered by the district, but that he has not been to it because he has not had any vacancies to fill.

Beyond word-of-mouth and job postings, there were no other recruitment efforts specifically mentioned for school librarians. Since there is not a high need to fill open positions in the district, Ms. Searle noted that no pipeline has been established for recruiting efforts. There is not a local program for graduate students

studying school libraries nearby, and at the time of her interview she did not see any concerted efforts made to combat this lacking pipeline. Ms. Capa said there are currently no plans to change or evaluate current recruiting processes. She did not see this as a need, as school librarian candidates are not at a shortage, in her opinion, and there are much more critical areas the district needs to focus on, such as special education.

4.6.2 Hiring

In beginning the discussion on hiring, Ms. Searle noted that buildings with a certain student population size in Sunville are required to have a full-time school librarian and not a library aide. She said that principals will sometimes try to get around this requirement, but HR stops such actions and assists in making sure libraries are properly staffed with certified individuals.

Ms. Capa of HR mentioned the importance of applicant efforts in looking for a position in the school district. She strongly encourages people who are applying in Sunville to reach out to principals during the process. She ensures that they first complete an application, but she insists that applicants try to contact principals so the principals can “put a face to the name.” She admitted that not all people might feel this way about applicants reaching out, but she believes it is important.

While applying for positions in Sunville, Ms. Kaneda reached out to the library services office and let Ms. Searle know that she was looking for a position. Unfortunately, Ms. Searle only plays a part in the hiring process if principals

specifically ask for her help. Ms. Kaneda said she was never sure if reaching out had helped any, because she knows Ms. Searle is not officially involved in hiring, but “people talk....You never know who knows who.”

Ms. Searle does not have any part in the screening of applicants to create a candidate pool. She did, however, indicate that the district has a process of screening applicants for instructional coaches (a building-level position responsible for professional development and instructional design with teachers, but not teaching responsibility with students). She said that she would very much like to do that sort of screening interview for school librarians in her school district:

Occasionally, a couple of people slip through, “Oh, I want to be a librarian, because I’m sick of teaching...!” I think it would be easier for the principals if they had a pool of qualified people that they could pick from, rather than worrying about getting someone and ending up with someone who is hopeless with technology. Alternatively, hire from a vetted pool, because then they would be making a decision for what’s right for their school. It wouldn’t be the whole world, it would be these people who could apply. And they could still hire a teacher from their school. It’s just those people would have to talk to [the library services department] first.

Though there is no screening of candidates, Ms. Searle does sometimes advise during the interview process. Most often, she provides content for principals to use during interviews. However, her work with the principal, Mr. Cassie, was an exception. Mr. Cassie used a panel to interview candidates the last time he hired a school librarian. This panel included Ms. Searle, the district library supervisor, for whom Mr. Cassie says he has great regard and would use again on future panels. The panel was included both in the selection of candidates for interview and in conducting

the interviews. Mr. Cassie said that using a hiring panel is not a policy required by the district, but a “best practice” he likes to follow.

Ms. Searle only provides questions and advice concerning interviews to principals when they specifically request it. She tailors the questions to their needs, such as whether they are looking for a librarian who is more traditional in collection management and literacy education, or if they are looking for someone who has more skills and experience with technology integration. Principal Cassie said that his interviews with librarians have consisted of an even split of questions from the categories of librarian as teacher, librarian as a resource, and librarian as operator of the library program. In her experience in interviewing in Sunville, Ms. Kaneda said that the questions in her interview were very much along the same lines as those mentioned by Principal Cassie. There were questions that focused on her thoughts on the librarian as manager of the library program, but also a number of questions that related to her teaching and classroom management.

Ms. Kaneda went through two interview processes to obtain her part-time positions. At the first school where she was hired, she was interviewed by the principal and the instructional coach. Once selected by that school, she was directed to another school by the referral of her new principal. There was a miscommunication, and she showed up at the incorrect time for the interview at her second position. She was unable to find any staff at first, but eventually found the entire school staff in an all-faculty meeting. The principal spoke with her for a few minutes alone, thought they had a good rapport, and rather than asking her back for another interview, he

asked her to come into the staff meeting and proceeded to have the entire staff interview her on the spot. Her words: “It was crazy!”

The selection decision of a candidate in Sunville School District is done at the building level. Ms. Searle stated, “The principal will hire [the librarian] like any other teacher, and they don’t have to talk to me at all.” She said that some principals would contact her and ask about the advantages and disadvantages of hiring people with different credentials. In their state, librarians are considered qualified if they either complete a graduate program in library science or pass a written exam on being a school librarian and have a teaching certificate. Whenever she is given the opportunity to provide input, Ms. Searle explains the advantages of hiring someone who has completed coursework in school librarianship versus someone who has simply passed an exam and may have no prior knowledge of teaching in the library or managing a school library program.

Regarding final selection, Principal Cassie said that he works with a hiring panel at his school and asks that they make a recommendation to him for hiring a librarian. He said that, while the decision ultimately rests with him, he could not recall a time of ever going against the hiring panel’s recommendation.

Ms. Capa indicated that HR is trying to make some changes to the hiring process. In particular, they want the process to be more transparent for others involved, like principals. When asked what she thought the district might do differently, she stated:

I think right now that is something the district is actually working on, is a workflow process, really. It's something brand new. It's still in the works. It'll be a little bit more electronic. A principal can actually see where it is in the process. Is it stuck in budget? Is it stuck in HR? Where is it in the process? Right now, a principal—I know I sent it up to budget and I'm waiting for budget to get it back to me. Until budget gets it back to me, I can't do anything.

The librarian, Ms. Kaneda, agreed that the length and complication of the hiring process is a problem the district needs to fix. She stated that HR in Sunville is “a huge bureaucracy” and they are “completely overwhelmed.”

4.6.3 Transfers Hires

As stated in the section on recruiting, Ms. Capa of HR indicated that recruiting internally for transfers could be a hindrance in the process of getting qualified people into positions. Principals do not always make the request to advertise because they already have someone they would like to hire. Ms. Searle confirmed that internal recruitment is really the only type of recruitment occurring and agreed with Ms. Kaneda that teacher evaluations are a major factor in internal recruitment: “Honestly, the teacher evaluation system is our biggest recruiter because people want (to get) out of the classroom. The librarians, thus far, haven't been evaluated under the new system.”

In the same way Ms. Capa of HR encourages new hires to speak directly with principals about their interest in a position, she encourages those interested in transfers to speak with their administrators and others in the district about wanting to switch from the classroom to the school library. Ms. Corazon did just that when the

librarian at her school left. The transfer within her school was an easy experience because she was vocal about her desired change with the principal. She had been waiting for the right position and when one opened up at her school, she simply went to the principal and indicated that she had the proper certification and “the principal was all excited.... It was a matter of filling out some paperwork and moving from classroom to library.”

As a part of the transfer process, Ms. Kaneda only had paperwork to complete because her contract was changing. She was moving from a full-time teaching position to two, part-time library positions. The change to part-time status required a new contract, which was negotiated differently than the full-time contract. She said the process was simple, and going from being a teacher to a librarian was not a factor at all.

4.6.4 Sunville Case Summary

In Sunville School District, the district level offices of HR and the library supervisor are not very involved in the recruiting and hiring of school librarians. There are few available positions and so most participants indicated that there was little need for recruiting. The library supervisor reported that there are very few recruiting efforts and, with no local LIS program in the state, not many places from which to recruit. The hiring process is conducted entirely at the building level, though principals do occasionally ask for the library supervisor to participate and advise on the process. Transfer hires in Sunville are very common, which more than one

individual attributed to teachers leaving the classroom and going to the school library, where they would no longer have to undergo rigorous teacher evaluations. Overall, decision-making is largely done at the building level with little involvement from district offices.

4.7 Summary of the Findings

These five cases demonstrate a number of differences in governance for the decision-making involved in recruiting and hiring school librarians. Districts place input and decision rights in differing combinations or extremes of the building and district levels, with governance sometimes changing at different points in the process within the same school district. The placement of input and decision rights is typically guided by being put in a certain place in the district organizational structure, as opposed to where knowledge-fit might be most applicable. For instance, a school district is more likely to put selection decision rights with the principal, regardless of their knowledge, because they are the person in charge of the school.

Recruiting and hiring processes can be formal or informal. In addition to recruiting and hiring processes, the process of hiring transfers was prominent in each of the districts and was the most informal of all the processes identified. Participants were rarely aware of any policies guiding the processes, with districts operating under a more practice-based model. In most districts, little, if anything, is being done to evaluate recruiting and hiring processes. In the next chapter, I discuss these findings and their implications in more detail.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter, I discuss the findings of the study. The structure of the chapter is organized by the research questions. I first discuss Research Question 1 which asks how school districts make decisions about recruiting and hiring. I then focus on Research Sub-question 1a, how organizational structure affects the processes, particularly in hiring. Sub-Questions 1b and 1c are grouped together in a discussion of policies, procedures, and the ways districts deviate from set practices. I grouped together all of Research Question 2 and its sub-questions on knowledge sharing, the use of specific knowledge sets, and the collaboration (or lack thereof) of all individuals and groups throughout the recruiting and hiring processes. After discussing the results of the research questions, I discuss the findings regarding factors affecting the processes that do not align with the research questions, particularly the affect school district appeal has on the recruiting process. After, I discuss unexpected findings, including the recruitment of minorities, the use of provisional employment, and the frequency and effect of transfer hires. This chapter concludes with the implications and limitations of the study and possibilities for future research.

5.1 Research Question 1

1. How do school districts make decisions about recruiting and hiring school librarians?

While examining the findings of this study, one of the first issues I encountered was the structure and wording of Research Question 1. The wording is problematic, as school districts do not make decisions about recruiting and hiring; the groups and individuals working in school districts make those decisions. Additionally, hiring and recruiting decisions are not singular events, but processes that include many people, smaller decisions, adherence to policies, and numerous other factors. After a closer look at the literature, particularly the governance archetypes used by Weill and Ross (2004), a better wording of this research question might be, “What is the governance structure used in school districts to make decisions about recruiting and hiring?” The political archetypes Weill and Ross present in their research on decision-making in IT governance do prove useful in understanding the process and governance of decision-making in school districts.

5.1.1 School District Governance Archetypes

In their theoretical framework on IT governance, Weill and Ross (2004) use political archetypes to describe different types of governance, both for input rights and decision rights regarding IT. With each archetype, they describe who holds which rights in monarchies, duopolies, feudal systems, federal systems, and anarchies. Descriptions of the six types of governance can be found in Figure 2.2.

The language and participants in the definitions of archetypes in IT governance can be adjusted to apply to the participants in the decision-making in the recruiting and hiring of school librarians.

The individuals and groups involved in IT decision-making—business executives, mid-level IT executives, and business and unit leaders—can be mirrored to their respective counterparts in school districts: district executives, mid-level district administrators, and building principals. In school districts, an executive is either the superintendent or one of the C-level executives, and the mid-level administrators are the library supervisor and the HR department. School districts have a similar overall structure to many enterprises with top-level decision-makers, mid-level, centralized decision-makers, and unit or site-based decision-makers. The conversion of definitions for the archetypes—from who has input and decision rights in the IT governance model to the school district governance model—is shown in Figure 5.2.

The findings of this study indicate that the governance structures for recruiting and hiring decision-making can be completely different. Additionally, governance for input rights can be different from the governance used for decision rights. As an example, consider the decision-making processes for recruiting and hiring in Paris School District.

- Recruiting is done almost entirely at the district level. Both HR and the library supervisor have input on what might be done to recruit for the school and how recruiting is then carried out. Those at the building level have almost no

Figure 5.2. The conversion of political archetypes from business governance on IT decisions to school district governance on recruiting and hiring decisions for school librarians.

Business Archetype	Who has decision or input rights?	School District Archetype	Who has decision or input rights?
Business Monarchy	A group of business executives or individual executives (CxOs). Includes committees of senior business executives (may include CIO). Excludes IT executives acting independently.	District Administrator Authority	The superintendent or a group of district administrators or individual administrators (Asst. Superintendents). Excludes library supervisors or HR acting independently.
IT Monarchy	Individuals or groups of IT executives.	Library Centralization AND/OR HR Centralization	The library supervisor AND/OR human resources.
Feudal	Business unit leaders, key process owners or their delegates	Site-Based Decentralization	School administrators, key process owners or their delegates
Federal	CxOs and business groups (e.g., business units or processes); may also include IT executives as additional participants. Equivalent of the central and state governments working together.	District Administrator and Site-Based Collaboration	Superintendent or Asst. Superintendents working with building principals. Equivalent of the central and state governments working together.
IT Duopoly	IT executives and one other group (e.g., CxO, business unit, or process leaders)	Collaboration with Library AND/OR Collaboration with HR	The library supervisor AND/OR HR working with one other group (e.g., superintendent, building principal)
Anarchy	Each individual user	Anarchy	Each individual user

involvement in the recruiting process. This is an example of library supervisor/HR centralization.

- Governance around input and decisions in hiring school librarians in Paris is entirely different than recruiting. In some cases, the library supervisor has a great deal of input toward the final decision, through participation in building-level candidate interviews and conducting informal district-level screening interviews. This exemplifies collaborative governance for input rights in hiring, with the library supervisor working with building-level administrators and their designees.
- The final hiring decision, though, and the rights to make it, resides with the principal. For input rights on hiring, Paris is operating with collaborative governance, with the library supervisor and HR having opportunities to work with the building-level. For decision rights in hiring, the governance is decentralized, with site-based decision-making.
- In addition to the differences in input and decision rights for recruiting and hiring, the district may use a different system of governance for the input and decision rights of transfer hires.

With districts making different choices in governance throughout the processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians, I identified six different areas where the governance structure for input and decision rights could vary within and between school districts:

- Allotments
 - Input rights
 - Decision rights
- Recruiting
 - Input rights
 - Decision rights
- Screening
 - Input rights
 - Decision rights
- Interviewing
 - Input rights
 - Decision rights
- Selection
 - Input rights
 - Decision rights

The findings of this study indicate that districts can use different governance structures for each of these five decision areas. Based on the findings, Figure 5.3 indicates the type of governance system each district uses for input and decision rights through recruiting, hiring, and transfer hires.

5.1.1.1 Site-Based Decentralization in Cotesworth and Sunville

Cotesworth School District uses decentralized site-based governance for decision-making throughout all aspects of recruiting and hiring. This is not surprising, as the district is committed to site-based decision-making. In Cotesworth's decentralization archetype, the rights for both input and decisions rest with the school administrator or their designees in the use of a hiring panel. In this governance model, the library supervisor and HR are hardly involved in the process, if at all.

Figure 5.3. Governance Archetypes for Recruiting, Hiring, and Transfer Hire Input and Decision Rights

	Allotments		Recruiting		Screening		Interviewing		Selection	
	Input	Decision	Input	Decision			Input	Decision	Input	Decision
District Administrator Authority	Maine N. Paris Red Rock Sunville	Maine N. Paris Red Rock								
Centralization with Library Supervisor AND/OR HR			Maine N. Paris Red Rock	Maine N. Paris Red Rock	Maine N. Paris Red Rock					
Site-Based Decentralization	Cotsworth	Cotsworth Sunville	Cotsworth Sunville	Cotsworth Sunville	Cotsworth Sunville	Cotsworth Sunville	Cotsworth Sunville	Cotsworth Maine N. Paris Red Rock Sunville	Cotsworth Maine N. Paris Red Rock Sunville	Cotsworth Maine N. Paris Red Rock Sunville
District Admin and Site-Based Collaboration									Red Rock *	Red Rock*
Collaboration with Library Supervisor AND/OR HR							Maine N. Paris Red Rock			Red Rock**

* Includes instances in which the superintendent might become involved in a hiring decision

** Includes instances in which the library supervisor is involved in a hiring decision

Like Cotesworth, Sunville School District's governance structure throughout all input and decisions is decentralized, but possibly for different reasons. While Cotesworth has specifically given those individuals and groups at the building level more rights in decision-making, the comments from participants in Sunville indicate less intention and more default practice in the presence of less structure at the district level. This is not to say that the governance structure is anarchical. Sunville's building-level administrators and their designees certainly have decision rights, but it may be possible that no one else has those rights, rather than because they were specifically assigned to those at the building level.

The site-based decentralization model may be the default in the governance of K-12 education, unless other structures are implemented. Weill and Ross (2004) indicate that federal and IT duopolies are more common in IT governance, but that is because of the business interests of keeping many decisions enterprisewide. In K-12 education, decision-making is typically more localized, so the default use of site-based decentralized governance is more likely.

5.1.1.2 Mixed Governance in Maine North and Paris

While Cotesworth and Sunville operate entirely under decentralized governance, governance in other districts fluctuates based on the input or decisions in the recruiting and hiring processes. Maine North and Paris school districts are similar in this regard. Both school districts place input and decision rights for recruiting in HR and library supervisor centralization. In these districts, input and decision rights

for recruiting are entirely at the district level. Paris and Maine North are also similar in that the centralization is split between the library supervisor and HR. Both groups have input and decision rights in recruiting, but they do not always communicate or coordinate well with one another (problems in communication will be discussed later in this chapter). Regardless of the split at the district level, neither district gives any input or decision rights to anyone at the building level for recruiting.

Maine North and Paris also follow the same pattern for interviewing and selection input and decision rights during the hiring process. Input rights and decision rights for screening candidates occurs again with centralized governance. For instance, HR in Paris is heavily involved in the screening process of candidates. This function is one of the multiple decisions made in the hiring process. Also in Paris, the library supervisor is given input rights for screening candidates. She not only conducts informal screening interviews, but principals sometimes invite her to take part in building-level interviews. Maine North works in a similar manner. HR and the library supervisor are both involved in formal and informal screening of candidates to create a pool, which gives them input rights and decision rights for screening.

In both Maine North and Paris, the decision rights for hiring have a different governance structure than input rights for hiring. As in Cotesworth and Sunville, the decentralized system is the means of governance for decision rights on interviewing and input and decision rights in selection in Maine North and Paris. Though the library supervisor has input rights during the interviewing process, she is not involved

in the final decision of hiring, which is left entirely to principals or their designees in hiring panels.

5.1.1.3 The Complicated Governance of Red Rock

Red Rock is the school district with the most confusing and variant governance structure for input and decision rights. Like Paris and Maine North, all input and decision rights for recruiting in Red Rock have centralized governance with HR and the library supervisor. Red Rock continues to be similar to Paris and Maine North in input rights for screening candidates, using centralized governance. However, when it comes to input and decision rights for interviewing and selection, Red Rock begins to differ and becomes much more difficult to categorize. In interviewing, district personnel in Red Rock are more involved than any other district in the process. For this reason, input and decision rights for interviewing are in collaborative governance with the library supervisor and HR working with building-level principals. In addition to decisions in interviewing, Red Rock continues to differ in governance for selecting candidates. On typical hiring practices, Red Rock is like the other districts, in that decision rights on the hiring of school librarians has site-based decentralized governance. However, with so many exceptions mentioned by the participants in Red Rock, governance for decision rights is not always clear. As the HR representative stated, there are times when the superintendent gets involved in hiring decisions. And while these seemed like exceptions, the involvement of the most senior administrator would be indicative of a district administrator and site-

based collaborative governance system. The superintendent's involvement is not the only exception. The rodeo interview and the instances of HR making hiring decisions before principals have an opportunity to do so indicates that hiring decision rights sometimes fall into collaborative governance, in which building principals work with the mid-level district administrators.

Knowing how these school districts make decisions and the governance they use for input and decision rights is not sufficient in understanding the process. The findings for sub-questions to Research Question 1 provide more information about the factors that affect decision-making, focusing on organizational structure, policy, and practices that deviate from policy.

5.2 Research Sub-Question 1a

1a. How does the organizational structure of the school district influence the decision-making process of recruiting and hiring school librarians?

The governance and organizational structure used for input and decisions rights affects both the recruiting and hiring decision-making processes. However, the effect is much stronger in hiring decisions than in recruiting decisions. The discussion of findings for this sub-question begins with a brief mention of organizational structure and recruiting. The section continues with discussion of the effect governance structure, site-based decision-making (SBDM), and district-level decision-making (DLDM) have on the hiring process. I use the SBDM and DLDM

terms throughout the discussion in conjunction with the governance archetypes because of their applicability in the field of education.

5.2.1 Governance and Decision-Making in Recruiting

Recruiting is less affected by the organizational structure and governance of the school district than is hiring. Maine North, Paris, and Red Rock place recruiting input and decisions at the district level, with very little participation from building-level individuals. As previously mentioned, the exception to DLDM for recruiting is the word-of-mouth tactic. In keeping with site-based governance, word-of-mouth is the primary recruiting effort in Cotesworth and Sunville. Rather than governance and organizational structure, recruiting is more affected by the availability of candidates or open positions and is discussed later in “Other Factors Affecting Decision-Making.”

5.2.2 Governance and Decision-Making in Hiring

In hiring, the tasks that a school district completes in the process, and the ways in which they complete them, are dictated by the governance structure of the school district. This governance structure is mostly separated into whether school districts operate primarily with site-level or district-level decision-making processes. Cotesworth is guided almost entirely by site-based decision-making (SBDM) with its decentralized governance, while Red Rock is governed mostly by district-level decision-making (DLDM) in a mix of library supervisor and HR collaboration and centralization, depending on the type of input or decision required. Paris is closest to

the middle of the spectrum, with formal and informal decisions happening at both the building and district levels. Maine North and Sunville operate under SBDM, but in a less extreme manner than does Cotesworth. The following two sections discuss the differences between using SBDM and DLDM during the hiring process.

5.2.2.1 The Effects of Site-Based Decision-Making on Hiring

5.2.2.1.1 Allotments

The autonomy and SBDM used in Cotesworth affects the hiring process before it even starts. It begins with principals being able to make alternative staffing choices with their budgets and to shift allotments away from employing school librarians, if they choose. This is a textbook example of site-based decentralized governance, in which both input and decision rights are placed at the building level. In Cotesworth, where a strong emphasis is placed on technology, some principals choose to allot their resources toward an instructional technology specialist (ITS), instead of or in addition to staffing a certified school library position. A number of principals in Cotesworth have chosen to do away with certified school librarians altogether and are staffing their libraries with aides. It is then the responsibility of the library supervisor, Ms. Hayes, to train these aides, who may have no experience in school libraries and are not certified to teach students.

Continuing to exercise her rights in decentralized governance, when Principal Cregg of Cotesworth looks at the allotments for her school, she sometimes does not even specify the types of certification she wants for a position. She leaves the

qualifications of a position open in the event that someone valuable, but not necessarily certified, might be a good hire. In her interview, she specifically indicated making this decision when hiring school librarians, in the event that someone without certification might be a better fit for the position.

5.2.2.1.2 Hiring Panels

In site-based centralized governance of decision rights, hiring procedures become informal, rather than uniformly tied to any set district policy or procedure. The process is also more likely to vary from school to school. In some districts, a principal may choose whether they want to use a hiring panel or conduct interviews on their own. Principal Seaborn in Cotesworth, for instance, uses hiring panels to conduct most of the hiring processes in her school. She selects candidates and then passes those candidates along to a committee to determine the final hire. While it is easy to see the value in using a hiring panel—employing the expertise and ideas of multiple individuals—it is difficult to see how this process would be beneficial in hiring school librarians if no experts in school librarianship were involved. In her interview, Principal Seaborn described using a hiring panel to hire teachers, but she did not use one when hiring a librarian. And instead of using a panel of teachers or any experts in librarianship, she had the ITS in her school conduct the interviews for a new school library position. While the school librarian and ITS often work closely with one another, such action is in direct contradiction to the benefits that Ms. Seaborn proclaimed using a hiring panel produces.

In Maine North, where hiring panels are required, the supervisor said that he is usually not a part of those panels, moving from hiring input rights in collaborative governance to the SBDM of hiring decision rights in decentralized governance. In Sunville, Mr. Cassie also uses hiring panels and specifically mentioned that he asks the library supervisor to serve on those panels. He said he greatly respects her as an expert in her field and that he would invite her to join a panel if he needs to hire a school librarian again in the future. However, the library supervisor in Sunville indicated that Principal Cassie is somewhat atypical; most principals do not ask for her input on hiring decisions. In a similar way, the supervisor in Paris must wait for a principal to ask her to be a part of a hiring panel, and because hiring panels are, again, at the discretion of the principal, she has interviewed candidates with just the principal and no committee.

5.2.2.1.3 Site-Based Decision-Making in Selection

Except in Red Rock, building-level individuals or groups make the final decision of hiring of a candidate. It is in this way that all districts but Red Rock use site-based decentralized governance for hiring input and decision rights. When there is no district-level involvement in the final decision, which is entirely possible given that the supervisor is not required to be a part of the process in any district, a decision from the building level can lead to the hiring of unqualified individuals. This result was noted as an issue in both Cotesworth and Sunville, where both input and decision rights have site-based, decentralized governance. Ms. Hayes in Cotesworth identified

issues with principals who hired uncertified individuals in the school library, and then Ms. Hayes became responsible for training them to make sure the library was functioning. These library aides do not often move beyond the role of the librarian as program administrator. The students in these schools miss out on the opportunity to have a librarian who fulfills all the roles of leader, teacher, instructional partner, and information specialist.

If SBDM does occur in Red Rock, it is not as extensive as in a district like Cotesworth. Since the library supervisor has already screened candidates, there is no need for a principal to bring in anyone with expertise in school librarianship during a building-level interview. Most of the interviews discussed in Red Rock were completed by just one or two administrators. When there is no hiring panel, there are no other ideas or opinions present in the process. And while the librarian, Ms. Sattler, appreciated this one-on-one experience and described it as being less stressful, it relies on the opinions of just the principal to make a final decision.

5.2.2.2 The Effects of District-Level Decision-Making on Hiring

While SBDM governs the hiring decision rights in most school districts, DLDM plays a part in the governance of input rights and decision rights in screening and the input rights of interviewing in the hiring process. The amount of input that library supervisors are allowed in each district changes both with the governance structure and who is involved. In particular, district-level input in the hiring process is typically found in the screening process. In this section, I discuss the screening

process, candidate pools, and the differences between HR screening, library supervisor screening, and a combination of the two. The section concludes with other parts of the hiring process that are affected by DLDM.

5.2.2.2.1 The Screening Process and the Creation Candidate Pools

In the centralized governance for input and decision rights in screening applicants, HR and possibly the library supervisor must first review the application materials. This is the case in Maine North and Paris School Districts. Similarly, before a principal or school can see an application in Red Rock, the applicant must first go through a screening at the district level to become a candidate. The opposite is true in Cotesworth and Sunville, where principals have easy access to applications as soon as they are submitted. In Red Rock, screening is done by HR and the library supervisor collaboratively. In Paris and Maine North, the screening process is done by HR, with the library supervisor having some informal involvement.

5.2.2.2.2 Screening by Human Resources

In between the extremes of SBDM in Cotesworth and DLDM in Red Rock is a school district like Paris, with a mixture where decisions are made at both levels. Due to DLDM, some of the hiring process in Paris has become fairly structured, perhaps overly so. The screening process for all certified teachers, including school librarians, requires the completion of an example lesson plan over the phone and an online written exercise using sample student data from standardized testing. For the school librarians, there were a number of complications with this process. While HR

indicated that this exercise was a part of the process to screen out unqualified candidates, the participating librarians stated that they completed the requirement at different times in the hiring process, some of them noting that they finished the screening tasks after they had received an informal job offer by a school principal. However, before being given a formal offer, all candidates had to complete the screening exercises. In addition to the timing difficulties, the content of the screening exercises was not tailored to school librarians. While no individuals indicated they were unable to complete the tasks, the librarians interviewed thought that the exercises were odd for a school librarian. The library supervisor, Ms. Vosen, said that HR had reached out to her to adjust the screening exercises for school librarians to be more applicable for their work, but that change in process had not been completed at the time of this study.

As mentioned previously, HR in Maine North also has a screening process for candidates. However, unlike Paris, where they are screening out and candidates are removed based on their skills, in Maine North it is a screening in. Due to her belief that Maine North has a shortage of applicants, the HR representative in that district said that the district is willing to entertain any applicant who is minimally qualified. Being only interested in including those candidates who have the minimum qualifications is not surprising, because HR does not formally involve the library supervisor in the screening process. The involvement of the library supervisor would likely include a more rigorous screening process.

5.2.2.2.3 Screening by Library Supervisors

While Cotesworth is the extreme in SBDM, Red Rock exemplifies the type of district in which more decision-making is done at the district level. The library supervisor in Red Rock has as much access to the application materials, as do those in HR. Red Rock also uses the application system to track the applicants throughout the entire hiring process. Ms. Murphy was the only supervisor to indicate such easy access to application materials. Ms. Murphy even advised HR on the questions they should be asking during their screening interviews and ways that HR might improve the process for school librarians, as the qualifications are different than for hiring a classroom teacher.

In this way, Ms. Murphy is unlikely to run into the same difficulties as Cotesworth's supervisor, who had to train uncredentialed library aides hired by principals. In fact, Ms. Murphy specifically mentioned that in screening candidates for a library position, she ensures that the candidates are prepared to work in the library in the way that Red Rock finds most suitable, namely that they are ready to teach and not just staff the library as a circulation assistant. Ms. Murphy screens out candidates who do not consider the library to be a classroom where learning takes place. For this same reason, the library supervisor in Sunville mentioned wanting to be able to screen candidates, though the site-based governance structure in her district does not allow her to do so. She wishes that she could have the same control of the candidate pool that Ms. Murphy does, so that she could help principals avoid hiring individuals who are not fully prepared to work in the school library.

In Paris, the library supervisor said that she conducts screening interviews, in addition to the formal screening processes that HR conducts, as did her predecessor. However, the HR representative did not mention this step as a part of the hiring process. While all the participating librarians had gone through that screening interview, it did not seem to be official and was completed at the discretion of the library supervisor. The librarians interviewed did indicate their belief that the library supervisor used the screening interviews to make recommendations to school principals, but they were uncertain if this was true and to what extent it influenced the principals' decisions.

The library supervisor in Maine North, Mr. Reynolds, conducts similarly informal screening interviews with applicants. However, he does not use these interviews to screen candidates in or out; he conducts interviews to better understand what training an individual might need if they are hired. This process would be more effective as input if these interviews were formalized so that he could prevent them from being hired at all, but he does not see it as part of his responsibilities to tell principals who they should or should not hire.

5.2.2.2.4 District-Level Input Rights Beyond Screening

Though the input rights of district-level individuals and groups for hiring are mostly limited to the screening process, there are examples in which those from the district level have had input at other stages in hiring. In Paris, the library supervisor, Ms. Vosen, and her predecessor, Ms. Zorn, were both involved in an advisory role for

some building-level interviews for school librarians. They participated in interviews as a part of a hiring panel and with the principal in interviewing the applicant. This seems, in part, to be attributed to the many efforts of Ms. Zorn to become a part of the process. Following in the culture of participation and advisement Ms. Zorn created, Ms. Vosen continued with similar efforts in her first year as supervisor.

Taking district-level involvement too far, however, was Ms. Murphy's creation of the so-called rodeo interview in Red Rock, in which multiple principals interviewed candidates simultaneously for positions in different schools. Rather than the opportunity to witness a school's atmosphere and possibly meet with some of the staff, school library candidates in these rodeo interviews were subjected to nerve-wracking conditions in which they had to take questions from the library supervisor and multiple principals at once.

5.2.2.2.5 District-Level Decision-Making in Final Selection

In their place at the extreme of DLDM in the hiring process, Red Rock was unique in decision-making when it came to selecting candidates to hire. Red Rock was the only district in which the superintendent was ever mentioned as being part of the process. Multiple participants discussed the hands-on approach that the district administration takes, but the inclusion of the superintendent in any individual hiring decision at the building level was a unique revelation.

This idea of finalizing hires at the district level in Red Rock was not just limited to the superintendent. On more than one occasion, Ms. Murphy had taken it

upon herself to make the final decisions for transfers and hiring decisions. In the case of Ms. Nedry, Ms. Murphy asked her to make an immediate decision about transferring to one of four schools from her previous position. In essence, Ms. Murphy had made the decision to transfer Ms. Nedry and was giving her the option to choose the school where she wanted to be transferred. No one at the site level had any say in the decision; Ms. Murphy gave Ms. Nedry the decision rights for the school.

Additionally, when one school was between principals, Ms. Murphy took the liberty of placing a librarian in the school where the position had previously been cut. While it is better to have someone in the position, in this instance, a district-level person placed an employee into a school without consulting the administrators of the school. While achieving the objective of getting a certified librarian into the school, such decision-making might be considered disrespectful and invasive. Building-level administrators might consider themselves usurped under such actions, feeling without much power to run their own school. Exemplifying this issue, Ms. Sattler in Red Rock said that when the librarian position opened up at her school, her principal felt rushed to fill it so HR did not place someone before he was able to choose a candidate on his own. Such a competitive nature between making decisions at the building level or the district level does not create a collaborative atmosphere.

5.3 Research Sub-Questions 1b and 1c

1b. How do school district policies and procedures influence the decision-making processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians?

1c. How do the actual processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians adhere to or differ from school district policies or procedures?

These two sub-questions ask about policies affecting the recruiting and hiring processes and how actual practice in a district differs in any way from those stated policies. In this section, I discuss how districts lacked official policies regarding recruiting and hiring and how this could lead to a failed transfer of institutional knowledge within the district. In turn, a lack of formal policies does affect the decision-making process. I also discuss the evaluation process (or lack thereof) in school districts.

5.3.1 Not Policy, But Practice

There was an assumption at the outset of this study that certain policies would guide or affect the recruiting and hiring policies in school districts—in particular, that districts would have put into place some sort of policy, beyond those policies set by the state, as to how they went about recruiting and hiring. Responses from participants revealed otherwise. If such policies exist, most participants taking part in recruiting and hiring could not point to them directly or did not know if they existed at all.

Typically, I asked questions about policy after discussing the specific tasks that went into the recruiting or hiring process. For example, after talking about how someone in HR works with principals in getting credentialed people for interviews, I would ask, “Are there policies or documentation that guide that process?” The overall

response to this question was negative. Some individuals would point to high-level policies created by an organization like the state Department of Education. For example, in Cotesworth, the policy that most people spoke about regarding the hiring process came from the state level. Specifically, this policy gave the principals in Cotesworth far more autonomy in hiring, allowing them to change their allotments so they were not required to have a librarian.

Responses were similar throughout the study. In Red Rock, when asked about the policies or documents that guide the hiring process, Ms. Grant of HR stated, “I don’t know if it’s written anywhere.... When I took this position, I followed along with what the other specialists were doing, but I don’t know if there is anything written down somewhere.” When I asked the library supervisor in Red Rock, Ms. Murphy, about whether there were policies that guide the hiring process, her single-word response was, “Probably.” She had no further information, other than if some policy existed, she was not sure where it was. Further questioning on the topic revealed that she did not follow any policies, but rather identified specific practices, many of which she had put into place during her long tenure as library supervisor.

The HR representative from Paris, Mr. Parsons, confirmed the notion that recruiting and hiring is guided more by practice than policy. When asked about the policies in place requiring that schools hire certified librarians over other staff to run the library, he said the following:

I think during our training [sessions with principals], we make it really clear to the principals that this is an expectation. It’s not something that has been written down that they have to follow. We do message it that this is required.

They do have required pieces. We do have a mechanism in place that's relatively new to ensure that it's being followed and followed with fidelity. Then it requires that my office work closely with the instructional director leadership team to stress the value of it, rather than make it a compliance issue that people just have to follow or you get your head banged in.

It is entirely possible that more policies exist. In Sunville, Ms. Capa of HR, who specifically works on hiring school librarians, was not aware of any specific policies in her district, but directed me to speak with another person in her office who worked more with technical issues of compliance, indicating that policies may exist, but she was not directly aware of them.

These findings indicate that the recruiting and hiring processes in these school districts follow a practice-based system. Corradi, Gherardi, & Verzelloni (2008) provide three descriptions for the study of practice. One of those descriptions refers to studying the way something is done:

Practice is a processual concept able to represent the 'logic of the situation' of a context. The study of practice, or better 'practising', yields important insights into how practitioners recognize, produce, and formulate the scenes and regulations of everyday affairs. (pg. 3)

Looking at the recruiting and hiring processes in these school districts as a practice-based system is more applicable, as they are not guided by policies and set procedures, but the practice upon which people agree things should be done.

5.3.2 Institutional Knowledge

Working in a practice-based system can be problematic when someone is new to his or her position and there is no established way to pass on institutional

knowledge. In Paris, for example, the supervisor was new to the position and was still trying to learn her role in recruiting and hiring. She only had the notes of her predecessor to guide her in the process, and those were not always helpful. Being new was particularly problematic in Paris, where some parts of the process have been highly formalized, such as the screening process performed by HR, with data exercises and mock lesson plans. To complicate things further, the supervisor was not the only new person in Paris. Mr. Parsons in HR also was new to his position, and he said that his office was still trying to figure out exactly where his predecessor had accounts for advertising about positions, because that information had not been passed along to him.

Beyond the institutional knowledge of specific individuals involved in the recruiting and hiring process, there was little discussion of training principals to hire people with specialized skills. More than one supervisor talked about advising individual principals about how they might go about the process of hiring school librarians, but they did not discuss ways to reach out to all principals. Mr. Parsons, of Paris, mentioned discussing criteria with principals, as mentioned earlier in the discussion, but it was largely informal.

From one perspective, it is possible to see this flexibility on the district's part as not forcing rules or regulations to guide a specific policy. Lacking a specific policy and instead guided by district practice, a principal or site-based hiring panel could conduct the hiring process in whatever way they chose. Such informality is sufficient for those individuals who are aware of what occurs in the school library and the

potential impact the school librarian can have on the school; however, what about those principals whose previous experiences with school library programs have been negative ones? When there is no policy or procedure in place to help a new or disenfranchised principal hire a qualified individual who can have a positive effect on the learning and teaching in the school, how are attitudes and misconceptions about school librarians going to change?

5.3.3 Evaluation of Recruiting and Hiring Processes

Throughout the interviews, participants revealed numerous things they would like to change about the recruiting and hiring processes in their school districts. Often, these statements came as a criticism by a school librarian describing his or her experience in the process. In a few instances, an HR representative identified a specific practice or procedure they would like to alter. However, formal evaluation of recruiting and hiring practices was uncommon. More evaluation is needed regarding these processes if districts are to understand if and when they are making mistakes or less than optimal decisions. Ignoring the comments of the librarians who have been through the process results in a missed opportunity to make adjustments and improve recruiting and hiring processes.

If an informal or formal evaluation of the processes does occur, it happens at the district level. While principals and, in particular, school librarians have ideas on how the processes might be altered, there are not established ways for those ideas or changes to reach district-level employees. In Red Rock, the school librarians had

numerous ideas about how HR and the library supervisor could improve recruiting and possibly decrease the shortage of applicants in the district, but there was no means by which they could express their ideas to the administration.

In one example of district evaluation, the HR department in Paris had reached out to the library supervisor to discuss possible changes to the screening exercises that seemed so confusing to the school librarians who had participated in them. However, this request for change had not occurred because of an established protocol for evaluation. HR had simply received some comments from some librarians and finally reached out to their expert in school libraries to see if changes could be made. Additionally, in Paris, Mr. Parsons of HR said that the hiring process was under evaluation due to the time it takes a person to get from submitting their application to actually being hired. He hopes to add more metrics to the system to determine ways that the district can improve, but being new to his position, he did not yet have specific ideas.

With a single task in recruiting, Red Rock did use a measured evaluation to assess and make changes in the process. During an interview, the HR representative in this district mentioned using data collected about the job fairs they attend to adjust where they will attend fairs in the future. They specifically track factors such as the number of discussions with job fair attendees that result in interviews of candidates or actual hires from each job fair. This is an example in which evaluation can positively affect practice in carrying out the recruiting and hiring processes.

Overall, more formal evaluation is needed in these districts to improve the recruiting and hiring processes. There is too little reflection on the district's part about what they are doing. Though some district-level administrators do minor evaluations, it was the librarians who had the most to say about how the process could be changed in the future. Districts should be talking to recent hires about what it was like going through their recruiting and hiring processes. They should be asking new hires where it went wrong and how things could improve for future hires.

Even districts without shortages could be doing more to evaluate their recruiting and hiring processes. Though Sunville has no problem hiring, the librarians interviewed for this study spoke about the many difficulties they experienced in the hiring process, including not knowing whether a position was actually open or if it was just being advertised. In Cotesworth, one librarian talked about not knowing what positions were available, because principals did not bother to advertise and were relying almost completely on word-of-mouth recruiting.

5.4 Research Question 2 and Sub-Questions 2a, 2b, and 2c

2. How do the specific knowledge sets held by different district-level departments influence the decision-making of principals regarding recruiting and hiring school librarians at the building level?

2a. How are school district library supervisors involved in making building-level recruiting and hiring decisions?

2b. How are human resource departments involved in making building-level recruiting and hiring decisions?

2c. In what ways, if any, do principals, supervisors, and human resource departments coordinate on decisions on recruiting and hiring school librarians?

Research Question 2 is concerned with understanding knowledge-fit and decision rights as expressed through the theoretical framework of IT governance. I worded the research questions to seek information about how the knowledge sets of others at the district level might influence and affect the final decisions made by principals. The results of this study show that the knowledge sets of specific groups and individuals are certainly a part of the process of giving input for making decisions about recruiting and hiring, but as stated earlier, they are not the guiding principles.

The sub-questions for Question 2 delve even more deeply into the use of different knowledge sets in decision-making. Most of this discussion is best reflected in the last sub-question, which asks how principals, HR, and library supervisors do or do not collaborate in making decisions. The intention of this sub-question was to capture other factors that contribute to the process outside the IT governance theoretical framework.

5.4.1 Involvement and Knowledge Sharing

While knowledge-fit is not the primary factor in determining governance for the processes of recruiting and hiring school librarians, it does play a role. However, participants did not describe knowledge sharing as a part of the process; rather, they

involved those with knowledge or expertise as a part of the process, sometimes with input rights and sometimes with decision rights. Knowledge sharing is the act of making one's knowledge available to others in an organization. The act is purposeful and must be done voluntarily (unlike reporting done out of obligation), and provided in a way that can be understood and used by others (Ipe, 2003). Knowledge sharing should not be confused with *knowledge transfer* (the movement of knowledge from one location or individual to another in an organization) or *shared knowledge* (knowledge that is not exchanged between two or groups, but a state in which both groups possess the same knowledge).

There were a small number of instances of knowledge sharing in this study. One example that occurred in more than one district was the library supervisor providing interview questions to principals when the supervisor would not be participating in a building-level interview. Ms. Murphy, Mr. Reynolds, and Ms. Searle all mentioned doing this in their districts. They are not involved, but they shared their knowledge and provided input to those with decision rights.

Instead of knowledge sharing, districts used the knowledge of library supervisors through involvement in the processes of recruiting and hiring, if they used their knowledge at all. For instance, when a library supervisor participates in a hiring panel for a building-level interview, the hiring panel benefits from the knowledge of the supervisor through the supervisor's involvement; however, the knowledge is not shared or transferred during this process, it is simply used as input.

The involvement of the supervisor's knowledge differs among the districts. In Red Rock, where DLDM is more prominent, the library supervisor is highly involved in the screening of applicants to create a candidate pool. She is able to provide questions to HR and to principals, which make their interviews more targeted to the work of school librarians. Red Rock's supervisor has slightly more involvement in the screening process than does the library supervisor in Maine North. Where Ms. Murphy in Red Rock can actually make an argument to eliminate candidates, Mr. Reynolds of Maine North only makes suggestions. Additionally, Mr. Reynolds does conduct screening interviews, they are more for his own purposes, to get to know the candidate pool, and do not affect the hiring process. His knowledge of the work of school librarians is not being used to its fullest advantage.

While there is no place for Ms. Searle of Sunville to share her knowledge at the beginning of the hiring process, one principal did speak of the definitive value of having her serve on the hiring panel for the last school librarian he hired. He specifically pointed to her expertise and noted that he would use her again in the future if such a need arose. In Paris, Ms. Vosen and her predecessor, Ms. Zorn, had similar experiences with principals. Their participation in interviews was not required, but the principals who did ask them to take part used their knowledge as active participants, not just observers or advisors. In another instance of possible knowledge sharing, Ms. Vosen pointed out that some interviews became opportunities to educate principals about how school library program can enrich the experiences of students and teachers.

5.4.1.1 Lack of Knowledge and Supervisor Involvement

There were numerous occasions in which the knowledge and expertise of others was not used in the process of recruiting and hiring school librarians. In Cotesworth, the Chief Office of Information and Technology, Mr. Moss, talked about principals not having enough information to go about recruiting well. In a district almost entirely run by SBDM, there is a definite need to involve district-level experts when hiring specialized staff. Mr. Moss pointed out that, though principals know what they want, they do not know where to find it. The result of not pairing knowledge and decision rights together is that when, or if, a principal hires an unqualified individual for the school library, they expect the district library staff to train them, rather than seeking the supervisor's assistance in advance to hire qualified people in the first place.

In Red Rock, HR would like the supervisor to be doing more for recruiting, but the supervisor seemed uninterested or unaware, which is a missed opportunity. This problem was evident in how both HR and the library supervisor discussed the recruiting process, but was even further demonstrated by the school librarians in the district as they talked about the shortage of applicants. The library supervisor, Ms. Murphy, explained that she advises on the recruiting process, but considering the emphasis that HR put on needing her to participate, they are not getting the advice that they need.

When districts did not use the knowledge of library supervisors, faulty perceptions of the school librarian's work also crept into the interview process. For

instance, one of the librarians in Cotesworth described an interview that consisted primarily of questions about whether her work would be a good fit with the ITS already employed at the school. Although the school librarian could offer a completely different and more than just complementary set of skills for instruction in the school, the work of the ITS was considered primary. If the library supervisors were consulted, the focus might instead have been on what the librarian could add to the school's instruction of technology, as opposed to just being there to support the ITS.

As in Cotesworth, Ms. Searle of Sunville has almost no part in the recruiting or hiring processes unless specifically asked by a principal. This, again, leads to principals hiring individuals to work in the library, who are not fully trained and typically require the assistance of, or further training from, the library supervisor. In an example of attempted knowledge sharing, when principals do contact Ms. Searle, she tries to explain the difference between hiring someone who has been trained to be a librarian and someone who simply has taken a test to receive their school library endorsement.

There were a number of instances in which individuals recognized their need of knowledge from others in their district, but none more impactful than principals who recognized the value of consulting with the library supervisor. Mr. Dodgson of Red Rock made it clear how valuable he sees the work that Ms. Murphy does in screening candidates before selecting among them for interviews. Mr. Cassie of Sunville noted how helpful Ms. Searle was when he brought her in to be a part of

hiring panels. Instances such as these demonstrate the power of knowledge sharing in making a decision, versus the freedom of autonomy principals may have in making decisions on their own.

5.4.2 Other Factors in Decision-Making

While decision-making around recruiting and hiring in these districts is guided primarily by governance, the structure of the organization, and the involvement (or lack of involvement) of the knowledge of others, there are other factors that play a role. In the recruiting process, the governance of decision-making is determined in large part by the availability of candidates and positions in the district. Other factors that affect the recruiting and hiring processes in school districts include recruiting minorities, provisional employment, and transfer hires.

5.4.2.1 The Effect of Availability of Candidates and Positions on Recruiting

In hiring, the most prominent factor affecting the decision-making process was the organizational structure of the district. In determining governance for the recruiting process, the availability of candidates and the number of available positions plays a much bigger role than the district's organizational structure. The number of candidates and positions available was not measured specifically for each district. Information about the supply and demand of school librarians was reported on by questions asked of the library supervisor and HR representative. Based on the findings, and with a better understanding of the factors that contribute to governance, future research should specifically measure the number of candidates available to a

school district and the number of positions open to candidates. For this study, Figure 5.4 describes the availability of candidates and positions in each district, as reported by participants. Without specific numbers, I labeled the availability of positions and candidates in each district as high, low, and mixed. A high number of available candidates were indicated by library supervisors and HR when there were plenty of people from whom to select to bring in for interviews. A low number of available candidates occurred when districts struggled to get people to apply for positions. In Maine North, the categorization of mixed availability is used because of the differing opinions of the library supervisor and the HR representative as to what is occurring in the district. In future research, such a designation can be avoided with specific measures, rather than participant perception.

Figure 5.4. Availability of School Librarian Candidates and Open Positions by District

District	Availability of Candidates	Availability of Open Positions
Cotesworth	High	Low
Maine North	Mixed	Mixed
Paris	Low	High
Red Rock	Low	High
Sunville	Low	Low

5.4.2.1.1 The Effects of High Candidate Availability/Low Volume of Open Positions on the Recruiting Process

Overall, the higher the number of candidates available to a school district, the less formalized their recruiting practices are. The districts with more candidates have less need for external recruiting tactics such as attending job fairs. Instead, these districts rely more on internal recruiting tactics such as word-of-mouth. In these districts, governance of input and decision rights on recruiting is at the site-based level. Without the need for district intervention to combat a low supply of applicants, each individual school can do their own recruiting however they choose.

It is easy to label Cotesworth a district with a high supply of candidates, because multiple participants described how motivated applicants are to work there. A district like Maine North, however, is slightly more difficult to categorize, due to the conflicting remarks by the supervisor and HR representative about the availability of librarians in the candidate pool. The library supervisor, Mr. Reynolds, discussed how the district has high number of available candidates due to the competitive salary the district offers teachers. However, Ms. Clark in HR believes that the district has a shortage of applicants and is struggling to fill positions. Due to their differing opinions, Mr. Reynolds' actions on behalf of Maine North follow the pattern of Cotesworth as a district of high appeal, while the actions of Ms. Clark are much more in line with the districts like Red Rock and Paris, which struggle with appeal. For this reason, Mr. Reynolds' actions are discussed in this section on high availability and low number of available positions and Ms. Clark's actions are discussed in the next

section on low availability and high number of open positions and their effect on recruiting.

In Cotesworth School District, recruiting efforts are the most informal of any of the school districts in this study. The library supervisors in Cotesworth emphasized the extreme importance of knowing someone in the district while conducting a job search there. Word-of-mouth is the most common recruiting tactic used in the district, a statement confirmed by individuals at all levels in Cotesworth.

When recruiting efforts become less formal due to high availability of candidates, the effort that goes into job postings also changes, with contradictions arising between the creation of job postings where positions may not be available and advertisements applicants see as vague and unhelpful. In Cotesworth, the requirement of putting up a job posting was put into question by the differing statements of participants. The library supervisor, Mr. Moss, said that each school is required to put up a job posting, though he did not indicate where. Ms. Lyman of HR confirmed this, but stated that the only place the district is required to post jobs is on the state's Department of Education website. Principal Seaborn, however, seemed to think that she was under no obligation to post an opening at her school if she already had someone available or sought to recruit through her staff. For instance, she said that while opening a new school, she did not advertise at all. She stated that applicants simply knew she needed to fill all positions, so there was no purpose in advertising. While principals lauded their autonomy at not having to make such job postings, both the library supervisors and librarians lamented their inability to know what positions

were available based on public postings. Ms. Ziegler specifically said, “It would be nice if [the process] were a little more formal so you could see what your options really are.”

The process of going to job fairs is also unnecessary in districts and schools with a high availability of candidates. The only job fair mentioned in Cotesworth was a transfer job fair reserved for employees in the district to transfer from one school to another; it was not open to the public. Ms. Ziegler, the librarian who mentioned this job fair, even questioned whether a school librarian would be able to find a position there.

Attending job fairs was not the only formal recruiting task excluded in districts with high availability of candidates. No efforts were made in Cotesworth to establish cohorts or conduct pre-service visits with nearby school library certification programs. In Maine North, the supervisor visits with students in pre-service programs, but not specifically for recruitment efforts. Similarly, the HR representative in Maine North attends job fairs, but not to recruit school librarians.

While Sunville School District does not have a high supply of school library candidates, it does have a low number of available positions, as mentioned by more than one participant from this district. This low supply is not due to issues with salary (as will be discussed in the next section with Paris and Red Rock). Instead, the library supervisor, Ms. Searle, stated that the school librarians in their district do not turnover; rather, they stay in their positions often until retirement. Ms. Searle also feels that Sunville has a large number of teachers moving toward school librarianship

to escape the demands of the evaluation system placed on teachers, a system not used for school librarians. The ability for a teacher to transfer in Sunville school district is made easier by state regulations that allow any certified teacher to become a school librarian simply by taking a certification exam. This option was not the case with other districts, and likely contributed to Sunville not having to formalize their recruiting efforts. With some teachers choosing to go to the library and leave the classroom, and the ease with which a teacher can obtain a librarian endorsement through testing, it calls into questions whether the district has a good supply of candidates.

As in Cotesworth, where there is high supply, the low demand of Sunville has left recruiting practices informal. While the HR representative in Sunville described a specific process to which principals must adhere for creating a job ad when a position is available, the librarians indicated that using the district's online postings or job ads was unreliable. Principals may advertise a position but already have someone in mind, filling the position before fully vetting applications. And while the district's policy seems clear, the actions of principals do not adhere to this policy. This leaves applicants more reliant on word-of-mouth to hear when a position is actually open and networking to obtain a position.

5.4.2.1.2 The Effects of Low Candidate Availability/High Volume of Open Positions on the Recruiting Process

The districts that struggle with filling the applicant pool and have a high number of open positions have procedures that are more formal for recruiting. Additionally, the governance for decision rights in these districts is typically in a library and HR centralized governance. With more effort needed to recruit school librarians for the entire district, input and decision rights are both placed at the district-level, giving HR and the library supervisor the opportunity to increase the size of the applicant pool as much as they can. Whether those district-level specialists take advantage of all possible tactics varies from district to district.

The most common reason given for a high number of available positions in a school district was salary. Red Rock struggles with recruiting candidates because of lower salary for staff than surrounding school districts. While this study was being conducted, Red Rock had five school library positions that had not been filled by the time the school year started. With the most significant shortage of applicants, Red Rock completes the broadest range of recruiting tasks. Ms. Grant of HR spoke of using nearly every tactic discussed in the study as something she already did or something of which she wanted to do more.

Like Red Rock, Paris also struggles with low supply of candidates, but to a lesser extent. Even so, Mr. Parsons of HR stated that the critical shortage of school library applicants in the district was exceeded only by special education. While Red Rock must compete with the higher salaries of neighboring districts, Paris pays as

well as most of the other districts in the state, but must compete with higher pay in near-neighboring states. Additionally, the library supervisor in Paris, Ms. Vosen, indicated that the district has an advantage over other districts in terms of support for school librarians, due to neighboring districts not having a district library supervisor. In Red Rock's state, this is not the case, as many neighboring districts have library supervisors.

In a district where the number of applicants is low, the process of recruiting is far more formalized. For instance, informal, word-of-mouth recruiting was hardly mentioned as a tactic used by the employees in Red Rock. When the library supervisor, Ms. Murphy, did discuss word-of-mouth recruiting, she said that it was a rare occurrence for an applicant to come to her purely from being referred by someone else in the school district. Red Rock was more reliant on more formal processes for recruiting.

Unlike Red Rock, Paris makes more use of word-of-mouth recruiting, though its recruiting process is still more formalized. Some librarians in the district indicated that it is too reliant on word-of-mouth recruiting. However, in keeping with their problems with a low availability of candidates, they have attempted to formalize the process of word-of-mouth recruiting. Rather than just rely on word-of-mouth, Mr. Parsons has turned it into a referral program with small incentives, though the librarian, Ms. Bourne, felt this was ineffective and that the district should be spending more time advertising on the district website and other online job sites, a recruiting tactic discussed later in this section.

In Red Rock, HR puts the most effort into placing job advertisements. Ms. Murphy assists HR in creating the job description for these ads. HR uses a system that posts ads directly to their website and a national job site, as well. Additionally, Ms. Grant said that she wants to place ads at universities and other locations. No other district described using this recruiting tactic as extensively as Red Rock.

In Maine North, Ms. Clark in HR also makes an effort to post job postings on their website and the state Department of Education's website, and she is looking for alternative locations to place job ads. She does this without discussing it with the library supervisor, Mr. Reynolds, who did not mention a need for such extensive recruitment.

In addition to job ads, HR's attendance at job fairs is more prominent in Red Rock compared to districts that have high availability of candidates. Ms. Grant of HR talked about attending numerous job fairs, both unidistrict and multidistrict. HR also tracked evidence of the effectiveness of attending certain job fairs by looking at the number of applicants and hires that resulted from their attendance. No other district collects metrics in this way for recruiting. Ms. Grant also talked about visiting pre-service librarians at universities not just locally, but in neighboring states as well. The librarian, Ms. Malcolm, discussed the library supervisor not reaching out to the students in such programs as a major flaw in the district's recruiting work.

While Ms. Clark in Maine North attends job fairs for recruiting efforts, school librarians are not a part of those efforts at this time. She would like to change that in the future and be in contact with certification programs at the nearby universities to

establish better relationships with them and increase the district's recruiting efforts. While the library supervisor, Mr. Reynolds, does visit the students at the local universities' certification programs. However, he does not do this specifically for recruiting, but instead visits as an expert and guest lecturer. Regardless of his intent, his efforts are likely noticed by students in those programs. And though this is not a formalized tactic for recruiting, it is likely of some benefit to what he sees as an adequate number of candidates. Ms. Vosen, the library supervisor, takes this tactic in Paris School District. She believes her relationships and visits with the students at local universities are essential to her recruiting efforts.

Regarding the creation of cohorts, Ms. Grant of HR in Red Rock wants to do more to get teachers in the district to get their library certification. However, one of the district's librarians, Ms. Nedry, said such efforts were unsuccessful in the past. Ms. Murphy made no mention of creating such a cohort, so it may have either been in the very early stages of planning or there may be poor communication occurring between the district offices.

5.5 Unexpected Findings

5.5.1 Recruiting Minorities

Throughout all of librarianship, there is underrepresentation of minorities. On average in the United States, school librarians were 90.3 percent white in 2009–2010, in contrast to the general population of the U.S., which was 63.7 percent white in the 2010 Census. Organizations such as the American Library Association have worked

to correct this problem with programs such as the Spectrum Scholars, which provides scholarships for minorities seeking their MLS. Throughout all the interviews, the only person to mention issues with recruiting minority librarians was Mr. Reynolds in Maine North School District.

The lack of emphasis in minority recruiting is indicative of a systemic problem throughout the field. Even in districts that have no problems in recruiting, equal opportunity employment should be a concern, particularly given the demographics in some of these school districts. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, only Cotesworth and Red Rock have student populations in which the percentage of minority students is less than that of the national average. Maine North, Paris, and Sunville all have a higher percentage of minority students than the national average. Unless the school librarians in their districts are more diverse than the national average (a demographic not measured in this study), there is a lack of minority representation on the library staff in those districts.

5.5.2 Transfer Hires

Though the process of recruiting and hiring was informal in some districts, the process of transferring from one school to another was more informal across all districts. With transfer hires, principals may hire an individual with a verbal confirmation and simply submit paperwork to HR later. Ms. Ziegler was an example of this process in Cotesworth; she had a conversation with her principal and then knew the position was hers. In the same district, Ms. Young had almost no contact

with HR during the course of her transfer process. With actions for transfer hires happening mostly at the building level, it is not surprising that transfers were more likely to occur in those districts using decentralized governance and SBDM, such as Cotesworth and Sunville.

The transfer process relies on word-of-mouth recruiting. This practice was generally true in Cotesworth; it was how Ms. Abbott found out about the position she transferred to from her previous school in Paris; and it was how Ms. Johnson completed her transfer in Maine North. Library supervisors, Mr. Reynolds and Ms. Searle, both indicated that many potential transfers end up in their office to talk about moving to the school library position from being a classroom teacher. They use these conversations as opportunities to find out if the teacher really wants to be a librarian or is just trying to escape the classroom. With the transfer process being so informal in most districts, it is likely that a number of potential transferring employees do not speak to the library supervisor. When the supervisor has not had the opportunity to screen transfer hires before they move from the classroom to the library, it is more likely that a person not fully capable of fulfilling the school library program's mission will end up there anyway. Nevertheless, as the HR representative in Cotesworth casually stated, "You just can't stop people, you know?"

Though provisional employment can have the most structured use of policies and procedures, transfers are quite the opposite. The use of word-of-mouth and the informal nature of the process can cause some uncertainty both at the district level and for potential applicants. At the district level it can be difficult to track which

schools will need replacements when principals make changes without immediately informing HR or the library supervisor. In this instance, it is also difficult to keep job ads current so that applicants might know the possibilities for employment.

Where the process of transfer hires is more informal, the transfer process is also more likely to lead to provisional employment. The transfer process relies heavily on word-of-mouth, internal recruiting in the school district, and the efforts of employees seeking new positions. These are all informal processes demonstrated in many districts. With current employees sometimes having first access to news that a position is becoming available, they might have the opportunity to reach out to a principal before a job ad is even posted. This situation is true for not only librarians, but also teachers who might fall under provisional employment.

The informal nature of transfer hires may also cause principals to forgo necessary steps in hiring a qualified candidate. If a potential transfer approaches a principal to fill the position before it has even been advertised, the principal may not have had an opportunity to consider changes, future directions, or possibilities to improve the school library program. Building-level administrators have very busy schedules and are juggling numerous tasks and projects at the same time. If there is no process in place, the easiest thing might be to fill a position with the first person who comes along and appears at least as competent as the last person to hold the position. In such a circumstance, when do things improve? When do the students benefit from more than just what has been the status quo?

5.5.3 Provisional Employment

In K-12 education, policy dictates a number of situations in which teachers who have not quite finished certification can be hired when circumstances require them, such as the emergency situation of starting a school year without enough teachers to fill every classroom. This situation can also happen with school librarians and can cause districts to enact policies on provisional employment. In provisional employment, an applicant or candidate may not be as fully qualified for employment as a school librarian, but they are typically on their way to completing certification. Multiple school districts had situations in which they dealt with provisional employment.

Unlike other parts of the recruiting and hiring processes, provisional employment may be highly regulated and dictated by specific policies at both the district and state levels. Paris exemplified this practice with numerous extra measures in place to ensure that all provisional employees were working toward certification. Concerns that districts would disregard qualification requirements made it necessary for extra paperwork to be filed and for HR to follow up with the state Board of Education about the progress of individual employees in their school districts.

In Maine North, provisional employment is only considered when there is no qualified staff available for hire. Though this may be the case in each school district, HR in Maine North was the only district to point it out specifically. Additionally, the candidate must have their teaching certificate, be currently enrolled in a library

certification program, and already have received at least nine credits toward their certification.

Whereas the HR representative in Maine North wanted there to be more opportunities to hire people provisionally, the library supervisor in Red Rock had to convince HR that hiring school librarians provisionally was a necessity. Due to their lack of certification, HR was unwilling to consider candidates for positions in the district who had not yet completed their degree. With Red Rock at such a shortage of candidates and staff, the library supervisor convinced HR that provisional employment must be used to ensure staffing in all schools.

5.6 Implications and Contributions

5.6.1 Governance Archetypes

The IT governance framework was successfully used to analyze the decision-making processes used in recruiting and hiring school librarians. However, a district's choice in governance did not consistently use knowledge-fit in the determination of input and decision rights. Without the use of knowledge-fit for determining the structure of the decision-making process, the governance structure of some districts does impede the ability of library supervisors to share their knowledge and have input rights on recruiting and hiring. Site-based decentralization is demonstrated in a district like Cotesworth, which provides no opportunity for the library supervisor to participate in the hiring of a school librarian. Additionally, in this structure, a

principal can choose not to hire a school librarian at all and instead employ a library aide.

While working in a completely site-based system does not allow for much inclusion of the expertise of specialists like the library supervisor, a shift to input and decision rights entirely at the district level with HR and/or library centralization is not better for recruiting and hiring. Just as the library supervisor is likely more aware of the specific qualities needed to work in the school library, building-level groups and individuals provide input about the specific needs of the students in their school and need to be involved in the decision. HR and the library supervisor should not be given total decision rights without input from the building level.

Specific to the hiring processes of screening, interviewing, and selecting candidates, governance was more likely to be based on placing decision rights at a certain level of the district hierarchy over the location of specific knowledge, most often resulting in site-based, decentralized governance for *decision* rights in all districts. In some school districts, *input* rights did operate under collaborative governance, with the library supervisor having the opportunity to contribute his or her knowledge and expertise in advising on the hiring of school librarians. This involvement included screening applicants to create a candidate pool, providing feedback to principals and hiring panels about interview questions and candidate responses, and partaking in hiring panels during site interviews.

In comparison, in districts that gave principals more autonomy through site-based governance, principals were able to leave the library supervisor out of the

process entirely. Unless state policies required otherwise, complete site-based governance in hiring allowed principals to change their allotments for school librarians or hire librarians whose certification comes from passing a test and not attending an LIS program.

In districts where supervisors did not participate in a screening of candidates, supervisors noted the need to provide professional development to the new librarians principals had hired who were not fully qualified or prepared to run a school library program. Library supervisors who had the opportunity to screen candidates did not mention the need to provide extra professional development for new hires. However, even in collaborative governance, if principals were not required to involve someone with expertise in school libraries, some chose not to do so. Requiring supervisors to train unqualified individuals is not a valuable use of the library supervisor's time or an appropriate allocation of the district's resources. Allowing principals to hire individuals that lack experience when qualified librarians are available, is a disservice to the students who could benefit from having a knowledgeable individual in the library who is ready to teach about information and technology literacies, digital citizenship, and a love of reading and learning for personal and professional enrichment.

Unlike the hiring process, the decision-making process of recruiting is affected by factors outside the district hierarchy and organizational structure. In the recruiting process, the choice of governance is affected by a shortage or surplus of candidates. In school districts where there is a surplus of candidates or a lack of

available positions, the governance of recruiting is site-based, allowing schools to rely on word-of-mouth and job postings for recruiting school librarians. In districts where there is a shortage of candidates, the governance of recruiting is centralized at the district level, with input and decisions being split between HR and the library supervisor. This district-level governance led to more structured recruiting and the use of more targeted recruiting tactics.

However, even in these districts with centralized governance for recruiting processes, there were multiple examples of a disconnect between the district-level offices. Centralizing decision-making on recruiting to explore more options and tactics was obfuscated by a lack of communication between the offices of HR and library services. In districts with centralized decision-making, these offices gave conflicting responses as to what the district was doing with recruiting and the ways in which the district might improve the recruiting process. Even in situations where the governance could allow of the library supervisor to provide more input and expertise, their knowledge was not being used effectively.

5.6.2 Observing Separate Governance for Input and Decision Rights

Observing decision-making in these districts using the IT governance framework—with a separation of input and decision rights—makes it easier to understand how a district’s distribution of rights for the key decision events of allotments; recruiting; screening, interviewing, and selecting candidates; and transfer hires. With input and decision rights split across the identified key decisions in

recruiting and hiring, it is easier to determine where changes might positively affect hiring practices. The separate observation and analysis of governance in input and decisions rights allowed for a closer examination of the involvement of the different parties in each step of the recruiting and hiring processes. As opposed to viewing a district's governance archetype unilaterally across the district (e.g., labeling a district as being governed entirely through centralized decision-making), the theoretical framework allowed for the school districts in this study to be observed as fluctuating between archetypes depending on the decision being made.

When a district applies a governance structure that separates input and decision rights, there is more opportunity to understand how the school district library supervisor is or could possibly be involved in the decision-making process of recruiting and hiring school librarians. In taking into account the possibility that supervisors can assist in multiple stages of the process and provide information, the possibilities for better decision-making processes is less about moving decision rights for a final hire away from the principal or the building level, and essentially removing the principal's or school's autonomy, and more about giving supervisors greater input rights throughout the process. There is no need to argue about who gets to make the final decision. The archetypes used by Weill and Ross (2004) allow for governance to be evaluated and possibly altered at each stage, rather than just at the final decision. For a district like Cotesworth, it is not about removing the autonomy that principals have in making decisions about their school. Instead, it is about making sure those

decisions are informed by including those with the right knowledge-fit to have input rights.

5.6.3 Policy and Practice

The issue of districts not having policies about recruiting, formal or informal, is a concern. Policies and procedures, whether formal or informal, were not a part of the governance of recruiting and hiring school librarians in these districts. In many cases, participants at both the building and district levels were unaware of whether policies existed. The exception to such ignorance was an awareness of policies established by the state or board of education. However, those policies were not about the recruiting and hiring processes, but about the legal concerns of hiring individuals with the required certification.

The recruiting and hiring processes in these districts were mostly practice-based, with individuals at all levels functioning around the understanding of “this is the way things are done.” Such practice results in districts frequently losing institutional knowledge and new employees at the building and district levels recreating practice again and again. Certainly there are occasions in which flexibility in policy or procedure is a benefit, allowing different schools to go about recruiting and hiring in different ways. However, when few individuals can point to policies or procedures for recruiting and hiring, the amount of variation within a district can be counter-productive, further fueled by breakdowns in communication and poor transfers of institutional knowledge. Informal practices such as word-of-mouth

recruiting, informal inquiry about available positions for transfers, the posting of job ads for positions that have already been filled, and informal screening interviews by supervisors that are not acknowledge by HR all affect the fluidity of recruiting and hiring processes and can make things more difficult for both the school district and the potential applicants. Formal policies or procedures that also provide some flexibility to schools and give opportunities for district input and site-based decision making could help alleviate some of these problems and make the process easier for those candidates trying to apply to a district.

5.6.4 Involvement and Knowledge Sharing

In the governance of recruiting and hiring, the use of knowledge-fit is more about involvement of those with knowledge than knowledge sharing. There were only a small number of examples of library supervisors sharing their knowledge with principals, such as a supervisor providing a principal with interview questions. When library supervisors were given the opportunity to lend their expertise, it was more likely to occur in collaborative governance by using someone's knowledge through involvement, rather than specifically sharing knowledge between individuals. For example, in an instance where a supervisor is asked to join a hiring panel, the supervisor was not sharing knowledge with a principal or with others on the panel, but their expertise in school libraries was being used and given voice through involvement.

However, due to site-based governance throughout the recruiting and hiring processes, there was neither knowledge sharing nor involvement of the library supervisor in many instances. In districts where there was a shortage of candidates and librarian positions were still open as the school year began, there were opportunities to use the expertise of the library supervisor to concentrate recruiting efforts, occasions of which districts were not taking advantage. Again, in districts that model site-based governance and that place all input and decision rights at the building level, they are giving principals the opportunity to eliminate the school library position in the allotment phase or hire librarians that, while certified through testing, may not have the same level of expertise as those who achieve certification through LIS programs. The principals in districts who use site-based governance for decision rights but call on the library supervisor for advisement professed how valuable they found the supervisor's expertise in evaluating candidates for hire.

One key part of knowledge sharing that is difficult to measure and observe is if people understand whether they have enough knowledge to make a decision well without any input from others. With some principals celebrating their autonomy, they may think it unnecessary to enlist the assistance of others to provide input on a hiring decision. However, as previous research in decision-making has shown, it is those individuals with the least specialized knowledge who are most likely to take control and make a decision on their own.

5.6.5 Evaluation of Processes

There were only a few instances in which districts were making any effort to evaluate the effectiveness of decision-making and practice in their recruiting and hiring processes. In particular, districts did not seek the views of the school librarians who had been through the recruiting and hiring processes. Recently hired librarians had a great deal to say about how their school districts could improve, but administrators were not asking for their thoughts.

The lack of evaluation of recruiting and hiring practices in these districts is a serious issue. There is little way for districts to improve their ability to recruit more qualified individuals to school library positions if they do not determine what is ineffective in their current practice. It is necessary for both district- and building-level individuals to reflect on their recruiting and hiring practices, collect data on their effectiveness, make alterations, and determine if those alterations make any difference. Evaluation of practice should be passed on as institutional knowledge. It should not be the responsibility of each new HR liaison in charge of recruiting school librarians to rediscover what others have done in the past and determine what has succeeded or failed. In particular, school districts are not using the evaluation resource most available to them: the school librarians who have been recently hired in their school district. In the interviews, these librarians had much to say about possible improvements for recruiting and hiring as participants of this study, but few indicated that their districts listened to their problems in going through the process.

5.6.6 Transfer Hires and Provisional Employment

While it was the intention of this study to focus on recruiting and hiring new school librarians, the high frequency of transfer hires and provisional employment was an unexpected addition to the findings. When a school district has a critical shortage of applicants and open positions at the beginning of the school year, transfer hires and provisional employment can be advantageous for ensuring that library programs are staffed. However, with the exception of one district, the input and decision rights for transfer hires operated under site-based governance, decentralizing the process completely. In most cases, employees who made a transfer either within a school or within the district to the library position went through a very informal process with little or no contact with anyone at the district level. The high frequency of transfer hires is in part due to the reliance on word-of-mouth, internal recruiting, and the individual efforts of employees looking for a position. Rather than make an effort to seek outside candidates, principals made more use of the suggestions of others in their schools or current employees seeking out a transfer when they heard that a position was available. The library supervisor was almost never involved in the process of hiring transfers, which leaves the process vulnerable to the hiring of unqualified individuals when a principal does not have any expertise in the needs of the school library program. More than one human resources representative voiced concern about how difficult it can be to intervene in the site-based, decentralized governance of transfer hires when the district does not create or enforce policies that allow for the involvement of district-level individuals in the process.

5.6.7 Hiring Other Specialists in K-12 Education

In the K-12 educational system, school librarians are not entirely unique as individuals in the district with special skills working alongside teachers. There is opportunity for the evaluation and application of governance for decision-making to not only benefit the recruiting and hiring processes for school librarians, but many types of specialists working in schools. As examples, special education teachers, site-based social workers or counselors, guidance counselors, physical education teachers, instructional specialists, and literacy coaches all take part in their own individual programs that work in collaboration with or as complimentary to classroom instruction. These specialists typically have additional certification requirements or specialized skill sets necessary for their position. It is unrealistic for a principal to be knowledgeable in all of these areas. However, if a district uses entirely site-based decentralized governance for recruiting and hiring, it becomes the principal's responsibility to hire all of these individuals. As with the recruiting and hiring of school librarians, by establishing a governance structure that allots some input rights to district specialists with knowledge in those particular areas, there is the possibility of improving recruiting hiring practices for multiple specialists in the school district., not just the school librarians. The library supervisor, Ms. Searle, of Sunville School District pointed to the hiring of instructional coaches in her district's schools that already have collaborative governance in place for decision-making for those hires.

5.7 Limitations

The following are limitations for this study:

Availability of Principals: There was low participation in this study for principals, who are a vital part of the recruiting and hiring processes. With so many districts having input or decision rights in site-based governance and at the building-level, the findings lack a diversity of insight from principals. In two school districts, I was unable to interview any principals, leaving out their important perspective on the recruiting and hiring processes.

Relying on Participant Referrals from Library Supervisors: With no partnership with these districts beyond being approved to conduct research, I was dependent on supervisors to suggest other individuals who might participate in the study. While this situation was not an issue for identifying the HR representatives typically working on hiring school librarians, it posed an issue for school librarians and principals. Using the suggestions of the supervisor could have resulted in bias toward individuals with whom the supervisor has a good professional relationship. This bias may have been mitigated to some degree by the requirement of including only recent hires, but it still presents the limitation of not hearing from those individuals who may not have responded to the supervisors' requests for participation.

District Differences: I made attempts to select districts as similar as possible for the study to eliminate differences in variables beyond the involvement of supervisors. However, there were still major differences due to the availability of

districts to participate in the study. For instance, Maine North has a much larger, more diverse student population and is in a more urban area than Cotesworth. The differences among districts likely contribute to some differences in practice. A district like Maine North is more restrictive in communication between district-level and building-level administrators than is Cotesworth. These differences could be reflected in policies or practices that are unrelated to the factors presented in this study.

5.8 Future Research

This study offers a beginning for how future research might look at the recruiting and hiring practices of school librarians. With a better understanding of the tasks involved, the effect of district governance on decision-making, and the use of knowledge to assign input and decision rights, it is possible to look at how all of these factors affect the librarians being hired. The clear next step in this research process is to look at the hiring process that school librarians went through and connect those recruiting and hiring practices with the measurable outcomes of hiring:

- school librarian success, retention, and attrition;
- the quality of school library program services, outreach, and involvement in a school;
- and the perceptions of the success of the school librarian and the library program as seen from students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other community stakeholders.

Future research should also look at student achievement in the school and engagement in the library program.

In particular, more research needs to be done on the effectiveness of recruiting efforts and the reliance of schools and districts on transfer hires, as opposed to looking outside of the school district for new talent. There are few established practices and protocols in recruiting school librarians and almost no efforts in evaluating current practice to see where changes could be made. With so many districts across the country facing a shortage of applicants for school library positions, this issue is critical. With more knowledge now available about the differences in decision-making in recruiting based on school district appeal, the lack of involvement of building-level administrators, and the informal nature of most recruiting, future research could better include such factors in the evaluation of the recruiting process and suggest adjustments that could be made by districts.

The personality of individuals and the culture of a school district, beyond the structures for policy and decision-making, must also play a role in decision-making in school districts. It cannot be forgotten that districts do not make decisions, individuals and committees make those decisions. While the organizational structure can affect many things, the individual can also have influence. For example, the library supervisors Mr. Reynolds and Ms. Murphy, are almost polar opposites in their approaches to dealing with other district administrators. The way they conduct their jobs is not entirely structured by the governance of the school district. Their personalities, and the ways in which their districts' cultures respond to those

personalities, play a role in the decision-making process. The question becomes, what exactly is it about personality that affects the decision-making process? Are these differences in personality about character traits or learned skills in leadership and management? I did not conduct any personality or skills assessments as a part of this study, so the ramifications of traits and skills in leadership, coercion, manipulation, inspiration, and numerous other possibilities have not been measured. As in all organizations, whether autocratic or anarchic, such factors likely play some role.

Future research should also replicate the use of this governance framework in other areas of decision-making in education. This model can be used to analyze the hiring practices of other specialists in K-12 education, such as instructional coaches, guidance counselors, school counselors, and other specialists that work with students and teachers at the building level. Additionally, the use of an established governance model that incorporates the knowledge-fit of groups and individuals into decision-making processes can be applied in numerous other places in the district, school, and classroom where specific knowledge is necessary for successful outcomes. These may include the decision-making processes surrounding curriculum design, accountability, professional development of staff and faculty, the mental and physical health of students, STEM programs, and many other areas.

5.9 Conclusion

This study examines the decision-making processes surrounding the recruiting and hiring of school librarians, using a theoretical framework from IT governance

that analyzes the use of knowledge-fit in the assignment of input and decision rights. While the theoretical framework is applicable, the school districts participating in this study did not use knowledge-fit to determine governance for where input and decision rights should be placed. In the hiring process, governance was based on placing the decision at a certain level of the district hierarchy, namely at the building level for site-based decision-making and autonomy. In recruiting, governance was established in relation to a district's needs based on a surplus or shortage of applicants and the number of available positions. In instances of governance in both recruiting and hiring, the knowledge of the library supervisor—the person at the district level with the most knowledge about the work of the school librarian—was often left out of the process entirely. With many principals and district employees unaware of how an effective library program is run, conducting recruiting and hiring without the expertise of someone like the library supervisor could have serious consequences to the opportunities available to students for learning information, technology, and reading literacies. This study indicates a way to look at those decision-making processes, providing valuable information to conduct future research on changing those processes to better serve students and K-12 education.

Appendices

Appendix A: Protocol for Library Supervisor Interviews

Appendix B: Protocol for HR Representative Interviews

Appendix C: Protocol for Principal Interviews

Appendix D: Protocol for Focus Groups

Appendix E: Map of US Census Divisions

Appendix A: Protocol for Library Supervisor Interviews

Introduction

“First of all, thank you for agreeing to this interview.

“As we’ve discussed, the purpose of my study is to look at how school districts recruit and hire school librarians.

“I would like to remind you that everything you say in this interview will be kept completely confidential. Your responses will not be reported to other individuals in this school district. Your name and school district, along with all individuals and entities therein, will remain anonymous. None of your responses will be associated with you or your school district at any time.

“By consenting to be in this study, you agree to participate in the study and be recorded during this interview. You may opt out of participating at any time during the study. Your participation is not required and is completely voluntary. If you prefer that I do not record this interview that is an option. No recording will be made and I will take notes during our interview instead.

“The recording of this interview is used for reference purposes only. It will be transcribed at a later date, but will never be published. Before anything is reported on this study, you will have the opportunity to review the transcript of this interview to insure that you agree with all that it contains and that it in no way misrepresents your statements. After all reporting on this study is finished, all recordings and transcripts will be completely destroyed. This will occur no later than ten years from today.

“At this time, please take another look at the consent form. If you have any questions about your participation, you may ask them now or at any time. Once you have reviewed the consent form, please initial here to agree to be recorded and print your name, sign, and date the form here.”

Background Questions

“I’d like to first begin with some general questions and get an idea of your background and history here in [name of school district].”

*[In the following sections, all **numbered** questions will be asked of the interviewee (depending on responses and the flow of the interview). All **lettered** sub-questions are intended as follow-ups if the interviewee needs more prompts in order to fully answer previous questions.]*

1. Tell me briefly about how you came to be the district library supervisor for [name of school district].

2. Tell me briefly about your experience here as school district library supervisor of [name of school district].
3. How long have you been in this position? How long have you been in your current district?
4. What is your educational background?
 - a. What degrees have you earned?
 - b. What certificates do you hold?
5. What is your professional background?
 - a. What other professional positions have you held prior to this one?
 - b. Have you ever been a teacher? School librarian? Other building- or district-level administrator?

Organizational Questions

“The following are a few questions about where you fit in the district organization and how you work with others in your district.”

1. Who do you report to in your school district?
2. What positions or departments report to you?
3. Which departments or individuals in the school district do you work with most closely?
 - a. With which individuals or departments do you meet with on a regular basis?
 - b. Do you have meetings with these individuals or departments weekly? Monthly? Other?
4. Overall, what access do you have to discussing issues or concerns directly with principals?
5. Overall, what access do you have to discussing issues or concerns directly with individuals or groups in the human resources department?
6. Is there any documentation can you provide that represents the organizational structure we are discussing?

Recruiting

“I’d now like to spend some time talking about recruiting school librarians.”

1. Tell me about your role in recruiting school librarians for your school district.
2. Do you work with anyone to recruit school librarians for your school district? (If yes:) Please tell me a little bit about that process.
 - a. Does your supervisor have any part in the recruiting process?
3. Where do you recruit school librarians from?
 - a. Tell me about any specific examples of your recruiting strategy.
 - b. Do you place ads?
 - c. Do you post on listservs?
 - d. Do you visit local universities with library programs?

- e. Do you recruit at conferences or other events?
4. Do you use any documents as a part of the recruiting process?
5. Are there any school district policies or procedures you are aware of that effect the recruiting process for school librarians?
6. Are there documents that detail these policies or procedures?
7. Do individuals and schools in your school district generally follow these procedures?
 - a. In what ways do they adhere to the stated policies or procedures?
 - b. In what ways have you seen people maybe go around the stated policies or procedures? Or break policies and procedures?
8. [If there are not stated policies or procedures,] What or who guides the process of recruiting school librarians?
9. Is there anything around recruiting that your school district does particularly well?
10. Are there any issues around recruiting librarians in your school district?

Hiring

“I’d now like to spend some time talking about hiring school librarians in your school district.”

1. Tell me about the role you play in hiring school librarians for your school district.
2. Do you work with anyone to hire school librarians for your school district? (If yes:) Please tell me a little bit about that process.
 - a. Does your supervisor have any part in the hiring process?
3. What criteria exist that help guide the hiring process of school librarians?
4. Do you use any documents as a part of the hiring process?
5. Are there any school district policies or procedures you are aware of that effect the hiring process for school librarians?
6. Are there documents that detail these policies or procedures?
7. Do individuals and schools in your school district generally follow these procedures?
 - a. In what ways do they adhere to the stated policies or procedures?
 - b. In what ways have you seen people maybe go around the stated policies or procedures? Or break policies and procedures?
8. [If there are not stated policies or procedures,] What or who guides the process of hiring school librarians?
9. Is there anything around hiring school librarians that your school district does particularly well?
10. Are there any issues around hiring librarians in your school district?

Exit

“Thank you for your time and participation in this study. At this time, I would like to remind you that I’ll be sending you a transcript of this interview and you will be given the time to edit any of your responses. It is likely that in the next month I may contact you by phone for another brief interview. This will be to clarify some of your responses and ask any additional questions. This interview should last no longer than 15 minutes. Finally, I would like to remind you that all of your responses during this interview will be kept completely confidential. Your name will never be associated with your responses, including with other individuals in your school district. Additionally, your school district will never be mentioned by name in the study.

“Again, thank you for participating. If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact me.”

Appendix B: Protocol for HR Representative Interviews

Introduction

“First of all, thank you for agreeing to this interview.

“I am a doctoral student at the University of Maryland and this study is part of my dissertation research. The purpose of my study is to look at how school districts recruit and hire school librarians.

“I would like to remind you that everything you say in this interview will be kept completely confidential. Your responses will not be reported to other individuals in this school district. Your name and school district, along with all individuals and entities therein, will remain anonymous. None of your responses will be associated with you or your school district at any time.

“By consenting to be in this study, you agree to participate in the study and be recorded during this interview. You may opt out of participating at any time during the study. Your participation is not required and is completely voluntary. If you prefer that I do not record this interview that is an option. No recording will be made and I will take notes during our interview instead.

“The recording of this interview is used for reference purposes only. It will be transcribed at a later date, but will never be published. Before anything is reported on this study, you will have the opportunity to review the transcript of this interview to insure that you agree with all that it contains and that it in no way misrepresents your statements. After all reporting on this study is finished, all recordings and transcripts will be completely destroyed. This will occur no later than ten years from today.

“At this time, please take another look at the consent form. If you have any questions about your participation, you may ask them now or at any time. Once you have reviewed the consent form, please initial here to agree to be recorded and print your name, sign, and date the form here.”

Background Questions

“I’d like to first begin with some general questions and get an idea of your background and history here in [name of school district].”

1. Tell me about how you came to be the [name of title] for [name of school district].
2. Tell me briefly about your experience here in human resources in [name of school district].
3. How long have you been in this position? How long have you been in this school district?
4. What is your educational background?

- a. What degrees have you earned?
 - b. What certificates do you hold?
- 5. What is your professional background?
 - a. What other professional positions have you held prior to this one?
 - b. Have you ever been a teacher? Other building- or district-level administrator?

Organizational Questions

“The following are a few questions about where you fit in the district organization and how you work with others in your district.”

- 1. Who do you report to in your school district?
- 2. What positions or departments report to you?
- 3. Which departments or individuals in the school district do you work with most closely?
 - a. With which individuals or departments do you meet with on a regular basis?
 - b. Do you have meetings with these individuals or departments weekly? Monthly? Other?
 - c. Do you regularly meet with school principals?
 - d. Do you regularly meet with anyone in the [name of library services office]?
- 4. Is there any documentation can you provide that represents the organizational structure we are discussing?

Recruiting

“I’d now like to spend some time talking about recruiting school librarians.”

- 1. Tell me about your role in recruiting school librarians for your school district.
- 2. Do you work with anyone to recruit school librarians for your school district? (If yes:) Please tell me a little bit about that process.
- 3. Tell me about any specific examples of your recruiting strategy.
 - a. Where do you recruit school librarians from?
 - b. Do you place ads?
 - c. Do you post on listservs?
 - d. Do you visit local universities with library programs?
 - e. Do you recruit at conferences or other events?
- 4. What documents, if any, do you use as a part of the recruiting process?
- 5. What school district policies or procedures you are aware of that regulate the recruiting process for school librarians?
- 6. Are there documents that detail these policies or procedures?
- 7. Do individuals and schools in your school district generally follow these procedures?
 - a. In what ways do they adhere to the stated policies or procedures?

- b. In what ways have you seen people maybe go around the stated policies or procedures? Or break policies and procedures?
8. [If there are not stated policies or procedures,] What or who guides the process of recruiting school librarians?
9. Is there anything around recruiting school librarians that your school district does particularly well?
10. Is there anything around recruiting school librarians that you would like your school district to do differently?

Hiring

“I’d now like to spend some time talking about hiring school librarians in your school district.”

1. Tell me about the role you play in hiring school librarians for your school district.
2. Do you work with anyone to hire school librarians for your school district? (If yes:) Please tell me a little bit about that process.
3. What criteria exist that help guide the hiring process of school librarians?
4. What do you look for in selecting individuals for the position of school librarian? *[The goal here is to ascertain what knowledge they have of school librarians and their programs. Here are some possible follow-ups.]*
 - a. Where did you gain this knowledge about school librarians and their work?
 - b. What helped you in establishing this set of criteria?
 - c. What is your previous experience with hiring school librarians?
 - d. Have these experiences ended positively or negatively?
5. Do you use any documents as a part of the hiring process?
6. What school district policies or procedures you are aware of that regulate the hiring process for school librarians?
7. Are there documents that detail these policies or procedures?
8. Do individuals and schools in your school district generally follow these procedures?
 - a. In what ways do they adhere to the stated policies or procedures?
 - b. In what ways have you seen people maybe go around the stated policies or procedures? Or break policies and procedures?
9. [If there are not stated policies or procedures,] What or who guides the process of hiring school librarians?
10. Is there anything around hiring school librarians that your school district does particularly well?
11. Is there anything around hiring school librarians that you would like your school district to do differently?

Exit

“Thank you for your time and participation in this study. At this time, I would like to remind you that I’ll be sending you a transcript of this interview and you will be

given the time to edit any of your responses. It is likely that in the next month I may contact you by phone for another brief interview. This will be to clarify some of your responses and ask any additional questions. This interview should last no longer than 15 minutes. Finally, I would like to remind you that all of your responses during this interview will be kept completely confidential. Your name will never be associated with your responses, including with other individuals in your school district. Additionally, your school district will never be mentioned by name in the study.

“Again, thank you for participating. If you have any questions at any time, you may contact me at the following phone number and email address.”

Appendix C: Protocol for Principal Interviews

Introduction

“First of all, thank you for agreeing to this interview.

“I am a doctoral student at the University of Maryland and this study is part of my dissertation research. The purpose of my study is to look at how school districts recruit and hire school librarians.

“I would like to remind you that everything you say in this interview will be kept completely confidential. Your responses will not be reported to other individuals in this school district. Your name and the names of your school and school district, along with all individuals and entities therein, will remain anonymous. None of your responses will be associated with you, your school, or your school district at any time.

“By consenting to be in this study, you agree to participate in the study and be recorded during this interview. You may opt out of participating in this interview or the study at any time. Your participation is not required and is completely voluntary. If you prefer that I do not record this interview that is an option. No recording will be made and I will take notes during our interview instead.

“The recording of this interview is used for reference purposes only. It will be transcribed at a later date. Before anything is reported on this study, you will have the opportunity to review the transcript of this interview to insure that you agree with all that it contains and that it in no way misrepresents your statements. After all reporting on this study is finished, all recordings and transcripts will be completely destroyed. This will occur no later than ten years from today.

“At this time, please take another look at the consent form. If you have any questions about your participation, you may ask them now or at any time. Once you have reviewed the consent form, please initial here to agree to be recorded and print your name, sign, and date the form here.”

Background Questions

“I’d like to first begin with some general questions and get an idea of your background and history here in [name of school district].”

1. Tell me briefly about how you came to be the principal at your school.
2. How long have you been in this position? How long have you been in your current district?
3. What is your educational background?
 - a. What degrees have you earned?
 - b. What certificates do you hold?

4. What is your professional background?
 - a. What other professional positions have you held prior to this one?
 - b. Have you ever been a teacher? School librarian? Or other building- or district-level administrator?

Organizational Questions

“The following are a few questions about where you fit in the district organization and how you work with others in your district.”

1. Who do you report to in your school district?
2. Which departments or individuals outside of your school do you work with most closely?
 - a. With which individuals or departments do you meet with on a regular basis?
 - b. Do you have meetings with these individuals or departments weekly? Monthly? Other?
3. What access do you have to district offices when you need assistance with something at your school?
4. What access do you have to discussing issues or concerns directly with individuals or groups in the human resources department?
5. Is there any documentation you can provide that represents the organizational structure we are discussing?

Hiring

“I’d now like to spend some time talking about hiring school librarians in your school.”

1. Tell me about your role in hiring school librarians for your school.
2. Do you work with anyone to hire school librarians at your school? (If yes:) Which individuals or groups do you work with to hire school librarians?
3. Do you use any documents as a part of the hiring process?
4. What do you look for in selecting individuals for the position of school librarian? *[The goal here is to ascertain what knowledge they have of school librarians and their programs. Here are some possible follow-ups.]*
 - a. Where did you gain this knowledge about school librarians and their work?
 - b. What helped you in establishing this set of criteria?
 - c. What is your previous experience with hiring school librarians?
 - d. Have these experiences ended positively or negatively?
5. Are there any school district policies or procedures you are aware of that effect the hiring process for school librarians?
6. Are there documents that detail these policies or procedures?
7. Do people in your school district follow these policies?
 - a. In what ways do they adhere to the stated policies on hiring?

- b. In what ways have you seen people maybe go around the stated policies or procedures? Or break policies and procedures?
8. [If there are no stated policies or procedures,] What or who guides the process of hiring school librarians?
9. Are there things you would like to do differently when hiring a school librarian?

Recruiting

“I’d now like to spend some time talking about recruiting school librarians.”

1. Tell me about the role you play in recruiting school librarians for your school.
2. Do you work with anyone to recruit school librarians for your school? (If yes:) Please tell me a little bit about that process.
3. Tell me about specific examples of your recruiting strategy.
 - a. Where do you recruit school librarians from?
 - b. Do you place ads?
 - c. Do you post on listservs?
 - d. Do you visit local universities with library programs?
 - e. Do you recruit at conferences or other events?
4. Do you use any documents as a part of the recruiting process?
5. Are there any school district policies or procedures you are aware of that effect the recruiting process for school librarians?
6. Are there documents that detail these policies or procedures?
7. Do individuals and schools in your school district generally follow these procedures?
 - a. In what ways do they adhere to the stated policies or procedures?
 - b. In what ways have you seen people maybe go around the stated policies or procedures? Or break policies and procedures?
8. [If there are not stated policies or procedures,] What or who guides the process of recruiting school librarians?
9. Is there anything around recruiting school librarians that your school district does particularly well?
10. Is there anything about recruiting school librarians that you wish your school district did differently?

Exit

“Thank you for your time and participation in this study. At this time, I would like to remind you that I’ll be sending you a transcript of this interview and you will be given the time to edit any of your responses. It is likely that in the next month I may contact you by phone for another brief interview. This will be to clarify some of your responses and ask any additional questions. This interview should last no longer than 15 minutes. Finally, I would like to remind you that all of your responses during this interview will be kept completely confidential. Your name will never be associated with your responses, including with other individuals in your school district.

Additionally, your school and school district will never be mentioned by name in the study.

“Again, thank you for participating. If you have any questions at any time, you may contact me at the following phone number and email address.”

Appendix D: Protocol for School Librarians

Introduction

“First of all, thank you for agreeing to this interview.

“I am a doctoral student at the University of Maryland and this study is part of my dissertation research. The purpose of my study is to look at how school districts recruit and hire school librarians.

“I would like to remind you that everything you say in this interview will be kept completely confidential. Your responses will not be reported to other individuals in this school district. Your name and the names of your school and school district, along with all individuals and entities therein, will remain anonymous. None of your responses will be associated with you, your school, or your school district at any time. Additionally, none of your responses will be discussed with anyone else in your school or school district. They will be completely confidential.

“By consenting to be in this study, you agree to participate in the study and be recorded during this interview. You may opt out of participating in this interview or the study at any time. Your participation is not required and is completely voluntary. If you prefer that I do not record this interview that is an option. No recording will be made and I will take notes during our interview instead.

“The recording of this interview is used for reference purposes only. It will be transcribed at a later date. Before anything is reported on this study, you will have the opportunity to review the transcript of this interview to insure that you agree with all that it contains and that it in no way misrepresents your statements. After all reporting on this study is finished, all recordings and transcripts will be completely destroyed. This will occur no later than ten years from today.

“At this time, please take another look at the consent form. If you have any questions about your participation, you may ask them now or at any time. Once you have reviewed the consent form, please initial here to agree to be recorded and print your name, sign, and date the form here.”

Background Questions

“I’d like to first begin with some general questions and get an idea of your background and history at [name of school] and in [name of school district].”

1. What is your educational background?
 - a. What degrees have you earned?
 - b. What certificates do you hold?
2. How long have you been at your current school?

3. How long have you been in your current district?
4. What is your professional background?
 - a. What other professional positions have you held prior to this one?
 - b. Have you ever been a teacher? School librarian? Or other building- or district-level administrator?

Recruiting and Hiring

1. Can you tell me the story about how you came to be hired as a school librarian at your school?
2. Was there anything in particular done by the school or the school district to recruit you?
 - a. Did you attend a job fair?
 - b. Did someone contact you by email or phone?
 - c. Did you read an ad on a website or in print somewhere?
3. Do you remember any particular documents that were a part of this process?
 - d. Job advertisement?
 - e. Recruitment letter?
 - f. Job offer?
 - g. Contracts?
4. Is there anything about the process of recruiting or hiring that you feel the school district does well?
5. What about the school in particular? Is there anything about their hiring process that you think went particularly well?
6. Is there anything about the process that you wish they would change or do differently?
7. Is there anything about the hiring process that you went through that you think might be different from what other librarians in the school district went through?

Organizational Questions

“The following are a few questions about where you fit in the district organization and how you work with others in your district.”

1. What access do you have to different district offices and departments when you need assistance with something at your school?

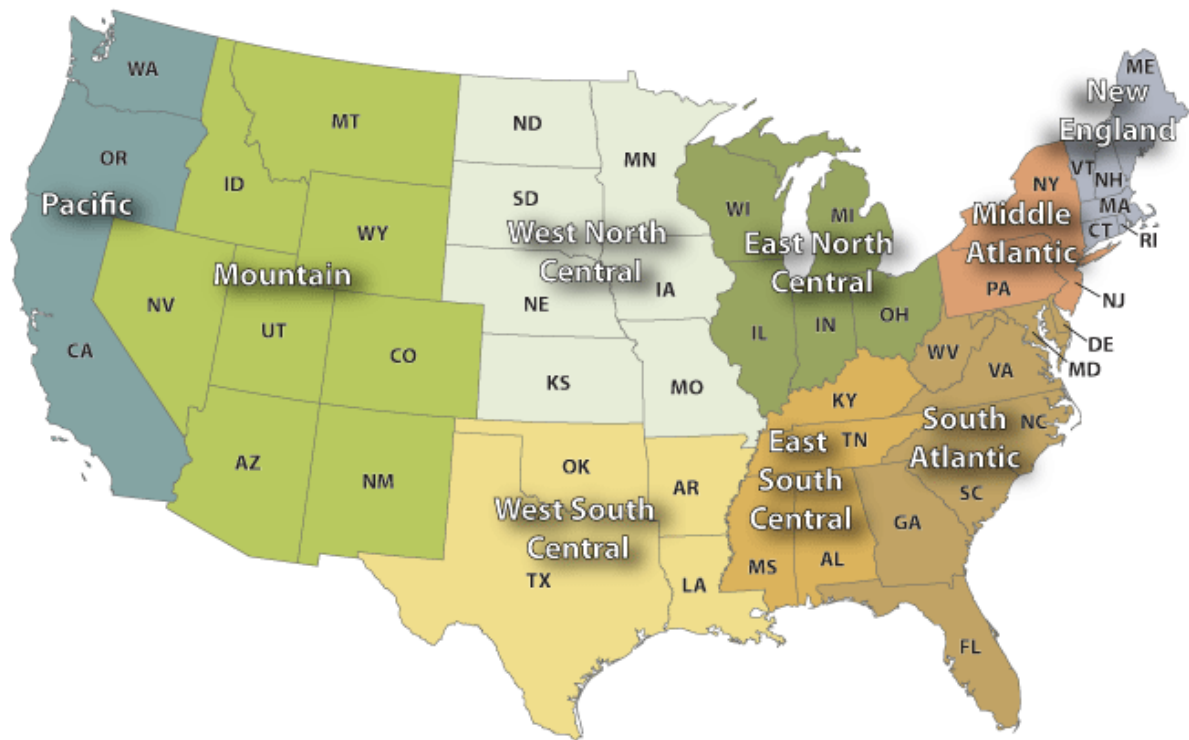
Exit

“Thank you for your time and participation in this study. At this time, I would like to remind you that I’ll be sending you a transcript of this interview and you will be given the time to edit any of your responses. It is possible that in the next month I may contact you by phone for another brief interview. This will be to clarify some of your responses and ask any additional questions. This interview should last no longer than 15 minutes. Finally, I would like to remind you that all of your responses during

this interview will be kept completely confidential. Your name will never be associated with your responses, including with other individuals in your school or school district. Additionally, your school and school district will never be mentioned by name in any reporting of the study.

“Again, thank you for participating. If you have any questions at any time, you may contact me by email or phone.”

Appendix E: Map of US Census Divisions



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